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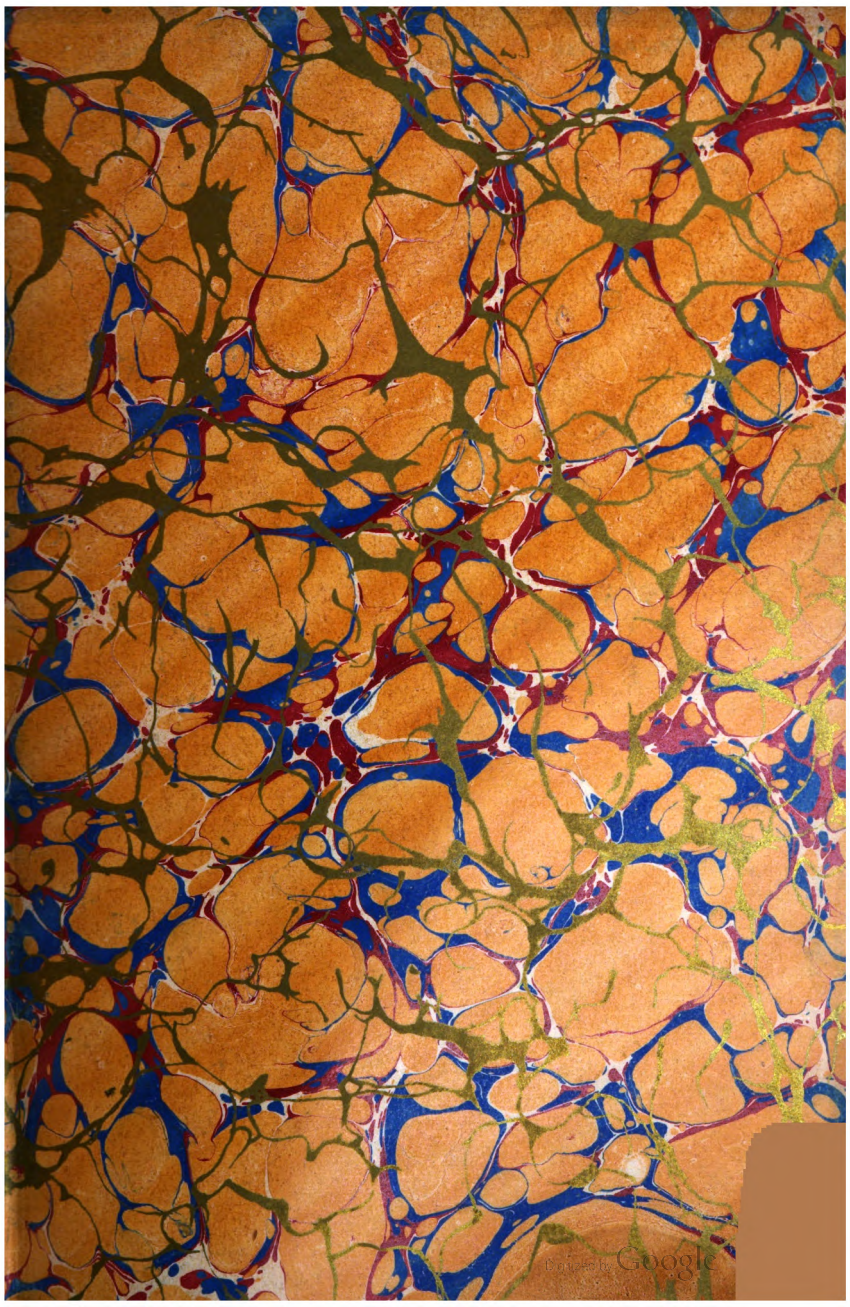
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The Works
OF
ALFRED LORD TENNYSON

VOLUME II.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

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THE WORKS

OF

ALFRED LORD TENNYSON

POET LAUREATE

VOLUME II.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
1891

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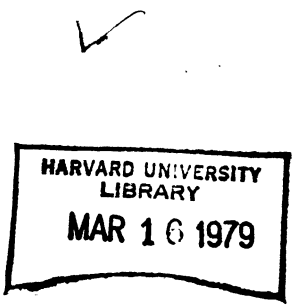

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE divisions of the present volume do not correspond precisely, except in the case of The Lover's Tale and The Window, with any adopted by Tennyson. The latest edition of his collected works recognizes no other general groups than those of Juvenilia, English Idylls, and Ballads and other Poems. After the collective edition of 1842, the new miscellaneous poems were published in a desultory fashion, some first in periodicals, and then from time to time in connection with longer poems, or in small volumes of collection. Thus when Maud was published, a number of shorter poems were added to fill out the volume; the same thing occurred when Enoch Arden was published; so also The Holy Grail and other Poems, and Ballads and other Poems were the titles of independent collections; but besides the poems thus brought together, there were a number scattered through magazines and journals or printed under special conditions, like certain patriotic poems following Tennyson's succession to the poet-laureateship in 1850.

In the present volume, the group headed by Lucretius contains the poems published in connection with Maud and with Enoch Arden, besides a number of other scattered poems; the division, Ballads and other Poems, coincides with the collection under that title, besides others also collected from scattered sources. These two volumes of miscellaneous poems, then, contain all of Tennyson's minor work as finally recognized by the author, excepting the recent collection under the head of Tiresias and other Poems, and excepting also certain poems originally printed by the poet but dropped in the revised editions.

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Both of these groups will be found in the sixth volume of this collection.

The first publication of many of the fugitive pieces is indicated in foot-notes or in prefatory notes. Some further desultory memoranda may be added here respecting certain of the poems.

The Third of February, 1852 (p. 55), is the title given to a lyric first printed in The Examiner newspaper under the signature of Merlin, and was called out by a debate held on that day in the House of Lords. There had been very sharp criticism in the journals and in public speeches of the course of Napoleon III., and the House of Lords showed a disposition to deprecate this criticism and sustain the usurper. Possibly the fact that he was then poet laureate led Tennyson to publish the verses anonymously, for the English and French had formed an alliance against Russia, and as court poet he could scarcely have uttered the lines without breach of etiquette.

The Charge of the Light Brigade (p. 57) first appeared in The Examiner December 9, 1854, with the following note: "Written after reading the first report of the Times correspondent, where only 607 sabres are mentioned as having taken part in the charge." The poem was revised for publication in the volume of Maud and other Poems, and a few months later was still further amended, and printed in its present form on a quarto sheet of four pages, with the following note at the bottom: "Having heard that the brave soldiers before Sebastopol, whom I am proud to call my countrymen, have a liking for my Ballad on The Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava, I have ordered a thousand copies of it to be printed for them. No writing of mine can add to the glory they have acquired in the Crimea; but if what I have heard be true, they will not be displeased to receive these copies of the Ballad from me, and to know that those who sit at home love and honor them."

ALFRED TENNYSON.

8th August, 1855.

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To the Rev. F. D. Maurice (p. 78). Lines addressed to the well-known divine who was godfather to Hallam Tennyson. Maurice had already dedicated to Tennyson the volume of Theological Essays which gave rise to acrimonious debate, and was followed by the exclusion of the author from a professor's chair at London University.

In the Valley of Cauteretz (p. 80) contains a reference to Arthur Hallam, who had been the poet's companion on the spot two and thirty years before.

The lines entitled In the Garden at Swainston (p. 90) were written in memory of the poet's friend Sir John Simeon.

The New Timon and the Poets (p. 225) was called out by a satirical poem by Bulwer Lytton, entitled The New Timon; a Romance of London, and containing allusion to the fact that the government had recently granted a pension to Tennyson. In this poem appeared the following lines: —

> "Not mine, not mine (O muse forbid) the boon
> Of borrowed notes, the mock-bird's modish tune,
> The jingling medley of purloined conceits,
> Out-babying Wordsworth and out-glittering Keats;
> Where all the airs of patchwork pastoral chime
> To drown the ears in Tennysonian rhyme!
> . . . . . .
> Let school-miss Alfred vent her chaste delight
> On 'darling little rooms so warm and bright;'
> Chaunt 'I'm aweary' in infectious strain,
> And catch her 'blue fly singing i' the pane;'
> Though praised by critics and adored by Blues,
> Though Peel with pudding plump the puling muse,
> Though Theban taste the Saxon purse controls,
> And pensions Tennyson while starves a Knowles,
> Rather be thou, my poor Pierian maid,
> Decent at last, in Hayley's weeds arrayed,
> Than patch with frippery every tinsel line,
> And flaunt, admired, the Rag Fair of the Nine."

Tennyson, indignant at the brutal lines, which were accompanied by a foot-note stating that he was "quartered on the

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public purse in the prime of life, without either wife or family," wrote the rejoinder The New Timon and the Poets, and published it in Punch, under the signature Alcibiades, February 18, 1846. The next week, apparently regretting the temper of his lines, he published in Punch the lines After-thought, which now appear as Literary Squabbles (p. 84). It should be noted that the quarrel was short lived. Both poets withdrew their verses, so far as they could, from circulation, and Tennyson afterward dedicated his Harold to the son of his old antagonist.

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LUCRETIUS

AND OTHER POEMS

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LUCRETIUS.

LUCILIA, wedded to Lucretius, found
Her master cold; for when the morning flush
Of passion and the first embrace had died
Between them, tho' he lov'd her none the less,
Yet often when the woman heard his foot
Return from pacings in the field, and ran
To greet him with a kiss, the master took
Small notice, or austerely, for—his mind
Half buried in some weightier argument,
Or fancy, borne perhaps upon the rise
And long roll of the Hexameter—he past
To turn and ponder those three hundred scrolls
Left by the Teacher whom he held divine.
She brook'd it not; but wrathful, petulant,
Dreaming some rival, sought and found a witch
Who brew'd the philtre which had power, they said,
To lead an errant passion home again.
And this, at times, she mingled with his drink,
And this destroy'd him; for the wicked broth
Confused the chemic labor of the blood,
And tickling the brute brain within the man's
Made havoc among those tender cells, and check'd
His power to shape: he loathed himself; and once
After a tempest woke upon a morn
That mock'd him with returning calm, and cried:

"Storm in the night! for thrice I heard the rain
Rushing; and once the flash of a thunderbolt—
Methought I never saw so fierce a fork—
Struck out the streaming mountain-side, and show'd

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A riotous confluence of watercourses
Blanching and billowing in a hollow of it,
Where all but yester-eve was dusty-dry.

"Storm, and what dreams, ye holy Gods, what dreams!
For thrice I waken'd after dreams. Perchance
We do but recollect the dreams that come
Just ere the waking: terrible! for it seem'd
A void was made in Nature; all her bonds
Crack'd; and I saw the flaring atom-streams
And torrents of her myriad universe,
Ruining along the illimitable inane,
Fly on to clash together again, and make
Another and another frame of things
For ever: that was mine, my dream, I knew it—
Of and belonging to me, as the dog
With inward yelp and restless forefoot plies
His function of the woodland: but the next!
I thought that all the blood by Sylla shed
Came driving rainlike down again on earth,
And where it dash'd the reddening meadow, sprang
No dragon warriors from Cadmean teeth,
For these I thought my dream would show to me,
But girls, Hetairai, curious in their art,
Hired animalisms, vile as those that made
The mulberry-faced Dictator's orgies worse
Than aught they fable of the quiet Gods.
And hands they mixt, and yell'd and round me drove
In narrowing circles till I yell'd again
Half-suffocated, and sprang up, and saw—
Was it the first beam of my latest day?

"'Then, then, from utter gloom stood out the breasts,
The breasts of Helen, and hoveringly a sword
Now over and now under, now direct,
Pointed itself to pierce, but sank down shamed
At all that beauty; and as I stared, a fire,
The fire that left a roofless Ilion,
Shot out of them, and scorch'd me that I woke.

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"Is this thy vengeance, holy Venus, thine,
Because I would not one of thine own doves,
Not ev'n a rose, were offer'd to thee? thine,
Forgetful how my rich procemion makes
Thy glory fly along the Italian field,
In lays that will outlast thy Deity?

"Deity? nay, thy worshippers. My tongue
Trips, or I speak profanely. Which of these
Angers thee most, or angers thee at all?
Not if thou be'st of those who, far aloof
From envy, hate and pity, and spite and scorn,
Live the great life which all our greatest fain
Would follow, centred in eternal calm.

"Nay, if thou can'st, O Goddess, like ourselves
Touch, and be touch'd, then would I cry to thee
To kiss thy Mavors, roll thy tender arms
Round him, and keep him from the lust of blood
That makes a steaming slaughter-house of Rome.

"Ay, but I meant not thee; I meant not her,
Whom all the pines of Ida shook to see
Slide from that quiet heaven of hers, and tempt
The Trojan, while his neat-herds were abroad;
Nor her that o'er her wounded hunter wept
Her Deity false in human-amorous tears;
Nor whom her beardless apple-arbiter
Decided fairest. Rather, O ye Gods,
Poet-like, as the great Sicilian called
Calliope to grace his golden verse—
Ay, and this Kypris also—did I take
That popular name of thine to shadow forth
The all-generating powers and genial heat
Of Nature, when she strikes thro' the thick blood
Of cattle, and light is large, and lambs are glad
Nosing the mother's udder, and the bird
Makes his heart voice amid the blaze of flowers:
Which things appear the work of mighty Gods.

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"The Gods! and if I go *my* work is left
Unfinish'd—*if* I go. The Gods, who haunt
The lucid interspace of world and world,
Where never creeps a cloud, or moves a wind,
Nor ever falls the least white star of snow,
Nor ever lowest roll of thunder moans,
Nor sound of human sorrow mounts to mar
Their sacred everlasting calm! and such,
Not all so fine, nor so divine a calm,
Not such, nor all unlike it, man may gain
Letting his own life go. The Gods, the Gods!
If all be atoms, how then should the Gods
Being atomic not be dissoluble,
Not follow the great law? My master held
That Gods there are, for all men so believe.
I prest my footsteps into his, and meant
Surely to lead my Memmius in a train
Of flowery clauses onward to the proof
That Gods there are, and deathless. Meant? I meant.
I have forgotten what I meant: my mind
Stumbles, and all my faculties are lamed.

"Look where another of our Gods, the Sun,
Apollo, Delius, or of older use
All-seeing Hyperion—what you will—
Has mounted yonder; since he never sware,
Except his wrath were wreak'd on wretched man,
That he would only shine among the dead
Hereafter; tales! for never yet on earth
Could dead flesh creep, or bits of roasting ox
Moan round the spit—nor knows he what he sees;
King of the East altho' he seem, and girt
With song and flame and fragrance, slowly lifts
His golden feet on those empurpled stairs
That climb into the windy halls of heaven:
And here he glances on an eye new-born,
And gets for greeting but a wail of pain;
And here he stays upon a freezing orb
That fain would gaze upon him to the last;
And here upon a yellow eyelid fall'n

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And closed by those who mourn a friend in vain,
Not thankful that his troubles are no more.
And me, altho' his fire is on my face
Blinding, he sees not, nor at all can tell
Whether I mean this day to end myself,
Or lend an ear to Plato where he says,
That men like soldiers may not quit the post
Allotted by the Gods: but he that holds
The Gods are careless, wherefore need he care
Greatly for them, nor rather plunge at once,
Being troubled, wholly out of sight, and sink
Past earthquake—ay, and gout and stone, that break
Body toward death, and palsy, death-in-life,
And wretched age—and worst disease of all,
These prodigies of myriad nakednesses,
And twisted shapes of lust, unspeakable,
Abominable, strangers at my hearth
Not welcome, harpies miring every dish,
The phantom husks of something foully done,
And fleeting thro' the boundless universe,
And blasting the long quiet of my breast
With animal heat and dire insanity?

"How should the mind, except it loved them, clasp
These idols to herself? or do they fly
Now thinner, and now thicker, like the flakes
In a fall of snow, and so press in, perforce
Of multitude, as crowds that in an hour
Of civic tumult jam the doors, and bear
The keepers down, and throng, their rags and they
The basest, far into that council hall
Where sit the best and stateliest of the land?

"Can I not fling this horror off me again,
Seeing with how great ease Nature can smile,
Balmier and nobler from her bath of storm,
At random ravage? and how easily
The mountain there has cast his cloudy slough,
Now towering o'er him in serenest air,

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A mountain o'er a mountain—ay, and within
All hollow as the hopes and fears of men?

"But who was he, that in the garden snared
Picus and Faunus, rustic Gods? a tale
To laugh at—more to laugh at in myself—
For look! what is it? there? yon arbutus
Totters; a noiseless riot underneath
Strikes through the wood, sets all the tops quivering—
The mountain quickens into Nymph and Faun;
And here an Oread—how the sun delights
To glance and shift about her slippery sides,
And rosy knees and supple roundedness,
And budded bosom-peaks—who this way runs
Before the rest—A satyr, a satyr, see,
Follows; but him I proved impossible;
Twy-natured is no nature: yet he draws
Nearer and nearer, and I scan him now
Beastlier than any phantom of his kind
That ever butted his rough brother-brute
For lust or lusty blood or provender:
I hate, abhor, spit, sicken at him; and she
Loathes him as well; such a precipitate heel,
Fledged as it were with Mercury's ankle-wing,
Whirls her to me: but will she fling herself,
Shameless upon me? Catch her, goatfoot: nay,
Hide, hide them, million-myrtled wilderness,
And cavern-shadowing laurels, hide! do I wish—
What?—that the bush were leafless? or to whelm
All of them in one massacre? O ye Gods,
I know you careless, yet, behold, to you
From childly wont and ancient use I call—
I thought I lived securely as yourselves—
No lewdness, narrowing envy, monkey-spite,
No madness of ambition, avarice, none:
No larger feast than under plane or pine
With neighbors laid along the grass, to take
Only such cups as left us friendly-warm,
Affirming each his own philosophy—
Nothing to mar the sober majesties

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Of settled, sweet, Epicurean life.
But now it seems some unseen monster lays
His vast and filthy hands upon my will,
Wrenching it backward into his; and spoils
My bliss in being; and it was not great;
For save when shutting reasons up in rhythm,
Or Heliconian honey in living words,
To make a truth less harsh, I often grew
Tired of so much within our little life,
Or of so little in our little life—
Poor little life that toddles half an hour
Crown'd with a flower or two, and there an end—
And since the nobler pleasure seems to fade,
Why should I, beastlike as I find myself,
Not manlike end myself?—our privilege—
What beast has heart to do it? And what man,
What Roman would be dragg'd in triumph thus?
Not I; not he, who bears one name with her
Whose death-blow struck the dateless doom of kings,
When, brooking not the Tarquin in her veins,
She made her blood in sight of Collatine
And all his peers, flushing the guiltless air,
Spout from the maiden fountain in her heart.
And from it sprang the Commonwealth, which breaks
As I am breaking now!

"And therefore now
Let her, that is the womb and tomb of all,
Great Nature, take, and forcing far apart
Those blind beginnings that have made me man
Dash them anew together at her will
Thro' all her cycles—into man once more,
Or beast or bird or fish, or opulent flower:
But till this cosmic order everywhere
Shatter'd into one earthquake in one day
Cracks all to pieces,—and that hour perhaps
Is not so far when momentary man
Shall seem no more a something to himself,
But he, his hopes and hates, his homes and fanes,
And even his bones long laid within the grave,

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The very sides of the grave itself shall pass,
Vanishing, atom and void, atom and void,
Into the unseen for ever,—till that hour,
My golden work in which I told a truth
That stays the rolling Ixionian wheel,
And numbs the Fury's ringlet-snake, and plucks
The mortal soul from out immortal hell,
Shall stand: ay, surely: then it fails at last
And perishes as I must; for O Thou,
Passionless bride, divine Tranquillity,
Yearn'd after by the wisest of the wise,
Who fail to find thee, being as thou art
Without one pleasure and without one pain,
Howbeit I know thou surely must be mine
Or soon or late, yet out of season, thus
I woo thee roughly, for thou carest not
How roughly men may woo thee so they win—
Thus—thus: the soul flies out and dies in the air."

With that he drove the knife into his side:
She heard him raging, heard him fall; ran in,
Beat breast, tore hair, cried out upon herself
As having fail'd in duty to him, shriek'd
That she but meant to win him back, fell on him,
Clasp'd, kiss'd him, wail'd: he answer'd, "Care not thou!
Thy duty? What is duty? Fare thee well!"

AYLMER'S FIELD.

1793.

DUST are our frames; and, gilded dust, our pride
Looks only for a moment whole and sound;
Like that long-buried body of the king,
Found lying with his urns and ornaments,

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Which at a touch of light, an air of heaven,
Slipt into ashes, and was found no more.

Here is a story which in rougher shape
Came from a grizzled cripple, whom I saw
Sunning himself in a waste field alone—
Old, and a mine of memories—who had served,
Long since, a bygone Rector of the place,
And been himself a part of what he told.

Sir Aylmer Aylmer, that almighty man,
The county God—in whose capacious hall,
Hung with a hundred shields, the family tree
Sprang from the midriff of a prostrate king—
Whose blazing wyvern weathercock'd the spire,
Stood from his walls and wing'd his entry-gates
And swang besides on many a windy sign—
Whose eyes from under a pyramidal head
Saw from his windows nothing save his own—
What lovelier of his own had he than her,
His only child, his Edith, whom he loved
As heiress and not heir regretfully?
But "he that marries her marries her name"
This fiat somewhat soothed himself and wife,
His wife a faded beauty of the Baths,
Insipid as the Queen upon a card;
Her all of thought and bearing hardly more
Than his own shadow in a sickly sun.

A land of hops and poppy-mingled corn,
Little about it stirring save a brook!
A sleepy land, where under the same wheel
The same old rut would deepen year by year;
Where almost all the village had one name;
Where Aylmer follow'd Aylmer at the Hall
And Averill Averill at the Rectory
Thrice over; so that Rectory and Hall,
Bound in an immemorial intimacy,
Were open to each other; tho' to dream
That Love could bind them closer well had made

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The hoar hair of the Baronet bristle up
With horror, worse than had he heard his priest
Preach an inverted scripture, sons of men
Daughters of God; so sleepy was the land.

And might not Averill, had he will'd it so,
Somewhere beneath his own low range of roofs,
Have also set his many-shielded tree?
There was an Aylmer-Averill marriage once,
When the red rose was redder than itself,
And York's white rose as red as Lancaster's,
With wounded peace which each had prick'd to death
"Not proven" Averill said, or laughingly
"Some other race of Averills"—prov'n or no,
What cared he? what, if other or the same?
He lean'd not on his fathers but himself.
But Leolin, his brother, living oft
With Averill, and a year or two before
Call'd to the bar, but ever call'd away
By one low voice to one dear neighborhood,
Would often, in his walks with Edith, claim
A distant kinship to the gracious blood
That shook the heart of Edith hearing him.

Sanguine he was: a but less vivid hue
Than of that islet in the chestnut-bloom
Flamed in his cheek; and eager eyes, that still
Took joyful note of all things joyful, beam'd,
Beneath a manelike mass of rolling gold,
Their best and brightest, when they dwelt on hers,
Edith, whose pensive beauty, perfect else,
But subject to the season or the mood,
Shone like a mystic star between the less
And greater glory varying to and fro,
We know not wherefore; bounteously made,
And yet so finely, that a troublous touch
Thinn'd, or would seem to thin her in a day,
A joyous to dilate, as toward the light.
And these had been together from the first.
Leolin's first nurse was, five years after, hers:

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So much the boy foreran; but when his date
Doubled her own, for want of playmates, he
(Since Averill was a decad and a half
His elder, and their parents underground)
Had tost his ball and flown his kite, and roll'd
His hoop to pleasure Edith, with her dipt
Against the rush of the air in the prone swing,
Made blossom-ball or daisy-chain, arranged
Her garden, sow'd her name and kept it green
In living letters, told her fairy-tales,
Show'd her the fairy footings on the grass,
The little dells of cowslip, fairy palms,
The petty marestail forest, fairy pines,
Or from the tiny pitted target blew
What look'd a flight of fairy arrows aim'd
All at one mark, all hitting: make-believes
For Edith and himself: or else he forged,
But that was later, boyish histories
Of battle, bold adventure, dungeon, wreck,
Flights, terrors, sudden rescues, and true love
Crown'd after trial; sketches rude and faint,
But where a passion yet unborn perhaps
Lay hidden as the music of the moon
Sleeps in the plain eggs of the nightingale.
And thus together, save for college-times
Or Temple-eaten terms, a couple, fair
As ever painter painted, poet sang,
Or Heav'n in lavish bounty moulded, grew.
And more and more, the maiden woman-grown,
He wasted hours with Averill; there, when first
The tented winter-field was broken up
Into that phalanx of the summer spears
That soon should wear the garland; there again
When burr and bine were gather'd; lastly there
At Christmas; ever welcome at the Hall,
On whose dull sameness his full tide of youth
Broke with a phosphorescence charming even
My lady; and the Baronet yet had laid
No bar between them: dull and self-involved,
Tall and erect, but bending from his height

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With half-allowing smiles for all the world,
And mighty courteous in the main—his pride
Lay deeper than to wear it as his ring—
He, like an Aylmer in his Aylmerism,
Would care no more for Leolin's walking with her
Than for his old Newfoundland's, when they ran
To loose him at the stables, for he rose
Twofooted at the limit of his chain,
Roaring to make a third: and how should Love,
Whom the cross-lightnings of four chance-met eyes
Flash into fiery life from nothing, follow
Such dear familiarities of dawn?
Seldom, but when he does, Master of all.

So these young hearts not knowing that they loved,
Not she at least, nor conscious of a bar
Between them, nor by plight or broken ring
Bound, but an immemorial intimacy,
Wander'd at will, and oft accompanied
By Averill: his, a brother's love, that hung
With wings of brooding shelter o'er her peace,
Might have been other, save for Leolin's—
Who knows? but so they wander'd, hour by hour
Gather'd the blossom that rebloom'd, and drank
The magic cup that fill'd itself anew.

A whisper half reveal'd her to herself.
For out beyond her lodges, where the brook
Vocal, with here and there a silence, ran
By sallowy rims, arose the laborers' homes,
A frequent haunt of Edith, on low knolls
That dimpling died into each other, huts
At random scatter'd, each a nest in bloom.
Her art, her hand, her counsel all had wrought
About them: here was one that, summer-blanch'd,
Was parcel-bearded with the traveller's-joy
In Autumn, parcel ivy-clad; and here
The warm-blue breathings of a hidden hearth
Broke from a bower of vine and honeysuckle:
One look'd all rosetree, and another wore

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A close-set robe of jasmine sown with stars:
This had a rosy sea of gillyflowers
About it; this, a milky-way on earth,
Like visions in the Northern dreamer's heavens,
A lily-avenue climbing to the doors;
One, almost to the martin-haunted eaves
A summer burial deep in hollyhocks;
Each, its own charm; and Edith's everywhere;
And Edith ever visitant with him,
He but less loved than Edith, of her poor:
For she—so lowly-lovely and so loving,
Queenly responsive when the loyal hand
Rose from the clay it work'd in as she past,
Not sowing hedgerow texts and passing by,
Nor dealing goodly counsel from a height
That makes the lowest hate it, but a voice
Of comfort and an open hand of help,
A splendid presence flattering the poor roofs
Revered as theirs, but kindlier than themselves
To ailing wife or wailing infancy
Or old bedridden palsy,—was adored;
He, loved for her and for himself. A grasp
Having the warmth and muscle of the heart,
A childly way with children, and a laugh
Ringing like proven golden coinage true,
Were no false passport to that easy realm,
Where once with Leolin at her side the girl,
Nursing a child, and turning to the warmth
The tender pink five-beaded baby-soles,
Heard the good mother softly whisper "Bless,
God bless 'em: marriages are made in Heaven."

A flash of semi-jealousy clear'd it to her.
My lady's Indian kinsman unannounced
With half a score of swarthy faces came.
His own, tho' keen and bold and soldierly,
Sear'd by the close ecliptic, was not fair;
Fairer his talk, a tongue that ruled the hour,
Tho' seeming boastful: so when first he dash'd

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Into the chronicle of a deedful day,
Sir Aylmer half forgot his lazy smile
Of patron "Good! my lady's kinsman! good!"
My lady with her fingers interlock'd,
And rotatory thumbs on silken knees,
Call'd all her vital spirits into each ear
To listen: unawares they flitted off,
Busying themselves about the flowerage
That stood from out a stiff brocade in which,
The meteor of a splendid season, she,
Once with this kinsman, ah so long ago,
Stept thro' the stately minuet of those days:
But Edith's eager fancy hurried with him
Snatch'd thro' the perilous passes of his life:
Till Leolin ever watchful of her eye
Hated him with a momentary hate.
Wife-hunting, as the rumor ran, was he:
I know not, for he spoke not, only shower'd
His oriental gifts on everyone
And most on Edith: like a storm he came,
And shook the house, and like a storm he went.

Among the gifts he left her (possibly
He flow'd and ebb'd uncertain, to return
When others had been tested) there was one,
A dagger, in rich sheath with jewels on it
Sprinkled about in gold that branch'd itself
Fine as ice-ferns on January panes
Made by a breath. I know not whence at first,
Nor of what race, the work; but as he told
The story, storming a hill-fort of thieves
He got it; for their captain after fight,
His comrades having fought their last below,
Was climbing up the valley; at whom he shot:
Down from the beetling crag to which he clung
Tumbled the tawny rascal at his feet,
This dagger with him, which when now admired
By Edith whom his pleasure was to please,
At once the costly Sahib yielded to her.

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And Leolin, coming after he was gone,
Tost over all her presents petulantly:
And when she show'd the wealthy scabbard, saying
"Look what a lovely piece of workmanship!"
Slight was his answer "Well—I care not for it:"
Then playing with the blade he prick'd his hand,
"A gracious gift to give a lady, this!"
"But would it be more gracious" ask'd the girl
"Were I to give this gift of his to one
That is no lady?" "Gracious? No," said he.
"Me?—but I cared not for it. O pardon me,
I seem to be ungraciousness itself."
"Take it" she added sweetly "tho' his gift;
For I am more ungracious ev'n than you,
I care not for it either;" and he said
"Why then I love it:" but Sir Aylmer past,
And neither loved nor liked the thing he heard.

The next day came a neighbor. Blues and reds
They talk'd of: blues were sure of it, he thought:
Then of the latest fox—where started—kill'd
In such a bottom: "Peter had the brush,
My Peter, first:" and did Sir Aylmer know
That great pock-pitten fellow had been caught?
Then made his pleasure echo, hand to hand,
And rolling as it were the substance of it
Between his palms a moment up and down—
"The birds were warm, the birds were warm upon him
We have him now:" and had Sir Alymer heard—
Nay, but he must—the land was ringing of it—
This blacksmith border-marriage—one they knew—
Raw from the nursery—who could trust a child?
That cursed France with her egalities!
And did Sir Aylmer (deferentially
With nearing chair and lower'd accent) think—
For people talk'd—that it was wholly wise
To let that handsome fellow Averill walk
So freely with his daughter? people talk'd—
The boy might get a notion into him;
The girl might be entangled ere she knew.

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Sir Aylmer Aylmer slowly stiffening spoke:
"The girl and boy, Sir, know their differences!"
"Good," said his friend "but watch!" and he "Enough,
More than enough, Sir! I can guard my own."
They parted, and Sir Aylmer Aylmer watch'd.

Pale, for on her the thunders of the house
Had fallen first, was Edith that same night;
Pale as the Jephtha's daughter, a rough piece
Of early rigid color, under which
Withdrawing by the counter door to that
Which Leolin open'd, she cast back upon him
A piteous glance, and vanish'd. He, as one
Caught in a burst of unexpected storm,
And pelted with outrageous epithets,
Turning beheld the Powers of the House
On either side the hearth, indignant; her,
Cooling her false cheek with a featherfan,
Him glaring, by his own stale devil spurr'd,
And, like a beast hard-ridden, breathing hard.
"Ungenerous, dishonorable, base,
Presumptuous! trusted as he was with her,
The sole succeeder to their wealth, their lands,
The last remaining pillar of their house,
The one transmitter of their ancient name,
Their child." "Our child!" "Our heiress!" "Ours!" for still
Like echoes from beyond a hollow, came
Her sicklier iteration. Last he said
"Boy, mark me! for your fortunes are to make.
I swear you shall not make them out of mine.
Now inasmuch as you have practised on her,
Perplext her, made her half forget herself,
Swerve from her duty to herself and us—
Things in an Aylmer deem'd impossible,
Far as we track ourselves—I say that this—
Else I withdraw favor and countenance
From you and yours for ever—shall you do.
Sir, when you see her—but you shall not see her—
No, you shall write, and not to her, but me:
And you shall say that having spoken with me,

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And after look'd into yourself, you find
That you meant nothing—as indeed you know
That you meant nothing. Such a match as this!
Impossible, prodigious!" These were words,
As meted by his measure of himself,
Arguing boundless forbearance: after which,
And Leolin's horror-stricken answer, "I
So foul a traitor to myself and her,
Never oh never," for about as long
As the wind-hover hangs in balance, paused
Sir Aylmer reddening from the storm within,
Then broke all bonds of courtesy, and crying
"Boy, should I find you by my doors again,
My men shall lash you from them like a dog;
Hence!" with a sudden execration drove
The footstool from before him, and arose;
So, stammering "scoundrel" out of teeth that ground
As in a dreadful dream, while Leolin still
Retreated half-aghast, the fierce old man
Follow'd, and under his own lintel stood
Storming with lifted hands, a hoary face
Meet for the reverence of the hearth, but now,
Beneath a pale and unimpassion'd moon,
Vext with unworthy madness, and deform'd.

Slowly and conscious of the rageful eye
That watch'd him, till he heard the ponderous door
Close, crashing with long echoes thro' the land,
Went Leolin; then, his passions all in flood
And masters of his motion, furiously
Down thro' the bright lawns to his brother's ran,
And foam'd away his heart at Averill's ear:
Whom Averill solaced as he might, amazed:
The man was his, had been his father's, friend:
He must have seen, himself had seen it long;
He must have known, himself had known: besides,
He never yet had set his daughter forth
Here in the woman-markets of the west,
Where our Caucasians let themselves be sold.
Some one, he thought, had slander'd Leolin to him.

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"Brother, for I have loved you more as son
Than brother, let me tell you: I myself—
What is their pretty saying? jilted, is it?
Jilted I was: I say it for your peace.
Pain'd, and, as bearing in myself the shame
The woman should have borne, humiliated,
I lived for years a stunted sunless life;
Till after our good parents past away
Watching your growth, I seem'd again to grow.
Leolin, I almost sin in envying you:
The very whitest lamb in all my fold
Loves you: I know her: the worst thought she has
Is whiter even than her pretty hand:
She must prove true: for, brother, where two fight
The strongest wins, and truth and love are strength,
And you are happy: let her parents be."

But Leolin cried out the more upon them—
Insolent, brainless, heartless! heiress, wealth,
Their wealth, their heiress! wealth enough was theirs
For twenty matches. Were he lord of this,
Why twenty boys and girls should marry on it,
And forty blest ones bless him, and himself
Be wealthy still, ay wealthier. He believed
This filthy marriage-hindering Mammon made
The harlot of the cities: nature crost
Was mother of the foul adulteries
That saturate soul with body. Name, too! name,
Their ancient name! they *might* be proud; its worth
Was being Edith's. Ah how pale she had look'd
Darling, to-night! they must have rated her
Beyond all tolerance. These old pheasant-lords,
These partridge-breeders of a thousand years,
Who had mildew'd in their thousands, doing nothing
Since Egbert—why, the greater their disgrace!
Fall back upon a name! rest, rot in that!
Not *keep* it noble, make it nobler? fools,
With such a vantage-ground for nobleness!
He had known a man, a quintessence of man,
The life of all—who madly loved—and he,

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Thwarted by one of these old father-fools,
Had rioted his life out, and made an end.
He would not do it! her sweet face and faith
Held him from that: but he had powers, he knew it
Back would he to his studies, make a name,
Name, fortune too: the world should ring of him
To shame these mouldy Aylmers in their graves:
Chancellor, or what is greatest would he be—
"O brother, I am grieved to learn your grief—
Give me my fling, and let me say my say."

At which, like one that sees his own excess,
And easily forgives it as his own,
He laugh'd; and then was mute; but presently
Wept like a storm: and honest Averill seeing
How low his brother's mood had fallen, fetch'd
His richest beeswing from a binn reserved
For banquets, praised the waning red, and told
The vintage—when *this* Aylmer came of age—
Then drank and past it; till at length the two,
Tho' Leolin flamed and fell again, agreed
That much allowance must be made for men.
After an angry dream this kindlier glow
Faded with morning, but his purpose held.

Yet once by night again the lovers met,
A perilous meeting under the tall pines
That darken'd all the northward of her Hall.
Him, to her meek and modest bosom prest
In agony, she promised that no force,
Persuasion, no, nor death could alter her:
He, passionately hopefuller, would go,
Labor for his own Edith, and return
In such a sunlight of prosperity
He should not be rejected. "Write to me!
They loved me, and because I love their child
They hate me: there is war between us, dear,
Which breaks all bonds but ours; we must remain
Sacred to one another." So they talk'd,
Poor children, for their comfort: the wind blew;

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The rain of heaven, and their own bitter tears,
Tears, and the careless rain of heaven, mixt
Upon their faces, as they kiss'd each other
In darkness, and above them roar'd the pine.

So Leolin went; and as we task ourselves
To learn a language known but smatteringly
In phrases here and there at random, toil'd
Mastering the lawless science of our law,
That codeless myriad of precedent,
That wilderness of single instances,
Thro' which a few, by wit or fortune led,
May beat a pathway out to wealth and fame.
The jests, that flash'd about the pleader's room,
Lightning of the hour, the pun, the scurrilous tale,—
Old scandals buried now seven decads deep
In other scandals that have lived and died,
And left the living scandal that shall die—
Were dead to him already; bent as he was
To make disproof of scorn, and strong in hopes,
And prodigal of all brain-labor he,
Charier of sleep, and wine, and exercise,
Except when for a breathing-while at eve,
Some niggard fraction of an hour, he ran
Beside the river-bank: and then indeed
Harder the times were, and the hands of power
Were bloodier, and the according hearts of men
Seem'd harder too; but the soft river-breeze,
Which fann'd the gardens of that rival rose
Yet fragrant in a heart remembering
His former talks with Edith, on him breathed
Far purelier in his rushings to and fro,
After his books, to flush his blood with air,
Then to his books again. My lady's cousin,
Half-sickening of his pension'd afternoon,
Drove in upon the student once or twice,
Ran a Malayan amuck against the times,
Had golden hopes for France and all mankind,
Answer'd all queries touching those at home
With a heaved shoulder and a saucy smile,

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And fain had haled him out into the world,
And air'd him there: his nearer friend would say
"Screw not the chord too sharply lest it snap."
Then left alone he pluck'd her dagger forth
From where his worldless heart had kept it warm,
Kissing his vows upon it like a knight.
And wrinkled benchers often talk'd of him
Approvingly, and prophesied his rise:
For heart, I think, help'd head: her letters too,
Tho' far between, and coming fitfully
Like broken music, written as she found
Or made occasion, being strictly watch'd,
Charm'd him thro' every labyrinth till he saw
An end, a hope, a light breaking upon him.

But they that cast her spirit into flesh,
Her worldly-wise begetters, plagued themselves
To sell her, those good parents, for her good.
Whatever eldest-born of rank or wealth
Might lie within their compass, him they lured
Into their net made pleasant by the baits
Of gold and beauty, wooing him to woo.
So month by month the noise about their doors,
And distant blaze of those dull banquets, made
The nightly wirer of their innocent hare
Falter before he took it. All in vain.
Sullen, defiant, pitying, wroth, return'd
Leolin's rejected rivals from their suit
So often, that the folly taking wings
Slipt o'er those lazy limits down the wind
With rumor, and became in other fields
A mockery to the yeomen over ale,
And laughter to their lords: but those at home,
As hunters round a hunted creature draw
The cordon close and closer toward the death,
Narrow'd her goings out and comings in;
Forbad her first the house of Averill,
Then closed her access to the wealthier farms,
Last from her own home-circle of the poor
They barr'd her: yet she bore it: yet her cheek

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Kept color: wondrous! but, O mystery!
What amulet drew her down to that old oak,
So old, that twenty years before, a part
Falling had let appear the brand of John—
Once grovelike, each huge arm a tree, but now
The broken base of a black tower, a cave
Of touchwood, with a single flourishing spray.
There the manorial lord too curiously
Raking in that millennial touchwood dust
Found for himself a bitter treasure-trove;
Burst his own wyvern on the seal, and read
Writhing a letter from his child, for which
Came at the moment Leolin's emissary,
A crippled lad, and coming turn'd to fly,
But scared with threats of jail and halter gave
To him that fluster'd his poor parish wits
The letter which he brought, and swore besides
To play their go-between as heretofore
Nor let them know themselves betray'd; and then,
Soul-stricken at their kindness to him, went
Hating his own lean heart and miserable.

Thenceforward oft from out a despot dream
The father panting woke, and oft, as dawn
Aroused the black republic on his elms,
Sweeping the frothfly from the fescue brush'd
Thro' the dim meadow toward his treasure-trove,
Seized it, took home, and to my lady,—who made
A downward crescent of her minion mouth,
Listless in all despondence,—read; and tore,
As if the living passion symbol'd there
Were living nerves to feel the rent; and burnt,
Now chafing at his own great self defied,
Now striking on huge stumbling-blocks of scorn
In babyisms, and dear diminutives
Scatter'd all over the vocabulary
Of such a love as like a chidden child,
After much wailing, hush'd itself at last
Hopeless of answer: then tho' Averill wrote
And bad him with good heart sustain himself—

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All would be well—the lover heeded not,
But passionately restless came and went,
And rustling once at night about the place,
There by a keeper shot at, slightly hurt,
Raging return'd: nor was it well for her
Kept to the garden now, and grove of pines,
Watch'd even there; and one was set to watch
The watcher, and Sir Aylmer watch'd them all,
Yet bitterer from his readings: once indeed,
Warm'd with his wines, or taking pride in her,
She look'd so sweet, he kiss'd her tenderly
Not knowing what possess'd him: that one kiss
Was Leolin's one strong rival upon earth;
Seconded, for my lady followed suit,
Seem'd hope's returning rose: and then ensued
A Martin's summer of his faded love,
Or ordeal by kindness; after this
He seldom crost his child without a sneer;
The mother flow'd in shallower acrimonies:
Never one kindly smile, one kindly word:
So that the gentle creature shut from all
Her charitable use, and face to face
With twenty months of silence, slowly lost
Nor greatly cared to lose, her hold on life.
Last, some low fever ranging round to spy
The weakness of a people or a house,
Like flies that haunt a wound, or deer, or men,
Or almost all that is, hurting the hurt—
Save Christ as we believe him—found the girl
And flung her down upon a couch of fire,
Where careless of the household faces near,
And crying upon the name of Leolin,
She, and with her the race of Aylmer, past.

Star to star vibrates light: may soul to soul
Strike thro' a finer element of her own?
So,—from afar,—touch us at once? or why
That night, that moment, when she named his name,
Did the keen shriek "Yes love, yes Edith, yes,"
Shrill, till the comrade of his chambers woke,

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And came upon him half-arisen from sleep,
With a weird bright eye, sweating and trembling,
His hair as it were crackling into flames,
His body half flung forward in pursuit,
And his long arms stretch'd as to grasp a flyer;
Nor knew he wherefore he had made the cry;
And being much befool'd and idioted
By the rough amity of the other, sank
As into sleep again. The second day,
My lady's Indian kinsman rushing in,
A breaker of the bitter news from home,
Found a dead man, a letter edged with death
Beside him, and the dagger which himself
Gave Edith, redden'd with no bandit's blood:
"From Edith" was engraven on the blade.

Then Averill went and gazed upon his death.
And when he came again, his flock believed—
Beholding how the years which are not Time's
Had blasted him—that many thousand days
Were clipt by horror from his term of life.
Yet the sad mother, for the second death
Scarce touch'd her thro' that nearness of the first,
And being used to find her pastor texts,
Sent to the harrow'd brother, praying him
To speak before the people of her child,
And fixt the Sabbath. Darkly that day rose:
Autumn's mock sunshine of the faded woods
Was all the life of it; for hard on these,
A breathless burthen of low-folded heavens
Stifled and chill'd at once; but every roof
Sent out a listener: many too had known
Edith among the hamlets round, and since
The parents' harshness and the hapless loves
And double death were widely murmur'd, left
Their own gray tower, or plain-faced tabernacle,
To hear him; all in mourning these, and those
With blots of it about them, ribbon, glove
Or kerchief; while the church,—one night, except
For greenish glimmerings thro' the lancets,—made

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Still paler the pale head of him, who tower'd
Above them, with his hopes in either grave.

Long o'er his bent brows linger'd Averill,
His face magnetic to the hand from which
Livid he pluck'd it forth, and labor'd thro'
His brief prayer-prelude, gave the verse "Behold,
Your house is left unto you desolate!"
But lapsed into so long a pause again
As half amazed half frighted all his flock:
Then from his height and loneliness of grief
Bore down in flood, and dash'd his angry heart
Against the desolations of the world.

Never since our bad earth became one sea,
Which rolling o'er the palaces of the proud,
And all but those who knew the living God—
Eight that were left to make a purer world—
When since had flood, fire, earthquake, thunder, wrought
Such waste and havoc as the idolatries,
Which from the low light of mortality
Shot up their shadows to the Heaven of Heavens,
And worshipt their own darkness as the Highest?
"Gash thyself, priest, and honor thy brute Baäl,
And to thy worst self sacrifice thyself,
For with thy worst self hast thou clothed thy God.
Then came a Lord in no wise like to Baäl.
The babe shall lead the lion. Surely now
The wilderness shall blossom as the rose.
Crown thyself, worm, and worship thine own lusts!—
No coarse and blockish God of acreage
Stands at thy gate for thee to grovel to—
Thy God is far diffused in noble groves
And princely halls, and farms, and flowing lawns,
And heaps of living gold that daily grow,
And title-scrolls and gorgeous heraldries.
In such a shape dost thou behold thy God.
Thou wilt not gash thy flesh for *him;* for thine
Fares richly, in fine linen, not a hair
Ruffled upon the scarfskin, even while

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The deathless ruler of thy dying house
Is wounded to the death that cannot die;
And tho' thou numberest with the followers
Of One who cried 'Leave all and follow me.'
Thee therefore with His light about thy feet,
Thee with His message ringing in thine ears,
Thee shall thy brother man, the Lord from Heaven,
Born of a village girl, carpenter's son,
Wonderful, Prince of peace, the Mighty God,
Count the more base idolater of the two;
Crueller: as not passing thro' the fire
Bodies, but souls—thy children's—thro' the smoke,
The blight of low desires—darkening thine own
To thine own likeness; or if one of these,
Thy better born unhappily from thee,
Should, as by miracle, grow straight and fair—
Friends, I was bid to speak of such a one
By those who most have cause to sorrow for her—
Fairer than Rachel by the palmy well,
Fairer than Ruth among the fields of corn,
Fair as the angel that said 'Hail' she seem'd,
Who entering fill'd the house with sudden light.
For so mine own was brighten'd: where indeed
The roof so lowly but that beam of Heaven
Dawn'd sometime thro' the doorway? whose the babe
Too ragged to be fondled on her lap,
Warm'd at her bosom? The poor child of shame,
The common care whom no one cared for, leapt
To greet her, wasting his forgotten heart,
As with the mother he had never known,
In gambols; for her fresh and innocent eyes
Had such a star of morning in their blue,
That all neglected places of the field
Broke into nature's music when they saw her.
Low was her voice, but won mysterious way
Thro' the seal'd ear to which a louder one
Was all but silence—free of alms her hand—
The hand that robed your cottage-walls with flowers
Has often toil'd to clothe your little ones;
How often placed upon the sick man's brow

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Cool'd it, or laid his feverous pillow smooth!
Had you one sorrow and she shared it not?
One burthen and she would not lighten it?
One spiritual doubt she did not soothe?
Or when some heat of difference sparkled out,
How sweetly would she glide between your wraths,
And steal you from each other! for she walk'd
Wearing the light yoke of that Lord of love,
Who still'd the rolling wave of Galilee!
And one—of him I was not bid to speak—
Was always with her, whom you also knew.
Him too you loved, for he was worthy love.
And these had been together from the first;
They might have been together till the last.
Friends, this frail bark of ours, when sorely tried,
May wreck itself without the pilot's guilt,
Without the captain's knowledge: hope with me.
Whose shame is that, if he went hence with shame?
Nor mine the fault, if losing both of these
I cry to vacant chairs and widow'd walls,
'My house is left unto me desolate.'"

While thus he spoke, his hearers wept; but some,
Sons of the glebe, with other frowns than those
That knit themselves for summer shadow, scowl'd
At their great lord. He, when it seem'd he saw
No pale sheet-lightnings from afar, but fork'd
Of the near storm, and aiming at his head,
Sat anger-charm'd from sorrow, soldierlike,
Erect: but when the preacher's cadence flow'd
Softening thro' all the gentle attributes
Of his lost child, the wife, who watch'd his face,
Paled at a sudden twitch of his iron mouth;
And "O pray God that he hold up" she thought
"Or surely I shall shame myself and him."

"Nor yours the blame—for who beside your hearths
Can take her place—if echoing me you cry
'Our house is left unto us desolate?'
But thou, O thou that killest, had'st thou known,

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O thou that stonest, had'st thou understood
The things belonging to thy peace and ours!
Is there no prophet but the voice that calls
Doom upon kings, or in the waste 'Repent?'
Is not our own child on the narrow way,
Who down to those that saunter in the broad
Cries 'Come up hither,' as a prophet to us?
Is there no stoning save with flint and rock?
Yes, as the dead we weep for testify—
No desolation but by sword and fire?
Yes, as your moanings witness, and myself
Am lonelier, darker, earthlier for my loss.
Give me your prayers, for he is past your prayers,
Not past the living fount of pity in Heaven.
But I that thought myself long-suffering, meek,
Exceeding 'poor in spirit'—how the words
Have twisted back upon themselves, and mean
Vileness, we are grown so proud—I wish'd my voice
A rushing tempest of the wrath of God
To blow these sacrifices thro' the world—
Sent like the twelve-divided concubine
To inflame the tribes: but there—out yonder—earth
Lightens from her own central Hell—O there
The red fruit of an old idolatry—
The heads of chiefs and princes fall so fast,
They cling together in the ghastly sack—
The land all shambles—naked marriages
Flash from the bridge, and ever-murder'd France,
By shores that darken with the gathering wolf,
Runs in a river of blood to the sick sea.
Is this a time to madden madness then?
Was this a time for these to flaunt their pride?
May Pharaoh's darkness, folds as dense as those
Which hid the Holiest from the people's eyes
Ere the great death, shroud this great sin from all!
Doubtless our narrow world must canvass it:
Or rather pray for those and pity them,
Who thro' their own desire accomplish'd bring
Their own gray hairs with sorrow to the grave—
Who broke the bond which they desired to break,

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Which else had link'd their race with times to come—
Who wove coarse webs to snare her purity,
Grossly contriving their dear daughter's good—
Poor souls, and knew not what they did, but sat
Ignorant, devising their own daughter's death!
May not that earthly chastisement suffice?
Have not our love and reverence left them bare?
Will not another take their heritage?
Will there be children's laughter in their hall
For ever and for ever, or one stone
Left on another, or is it a light thing
That I their guest, their host, their ancient friend,
I made by these the last of all my race
Must cry to these the last of theirs, as cried
Christ ere His agony to those that swore
Not by the temple but the gold, and made
Their own traditions God, and slew the Lord,
And left their memories a world's curse—'Behold,
Your house is left unto you desolate?'"

Ended he had not, but she brook'd no more:
Long since her heart had beat remorselessly,
Her crampt-up sorrow pain'd her, and a sense
Of meanness in her unresisting life.
Then their eyes vext her; for on entering
He had cast the curtains of their seat aside—
Black velvet of the costliest—she herself
Had seen to that: fain had she closed them now,
Yet dared not stir to do it, only near'd
Her husband inch by inch, but when she laid,
Wifelike, her hand in one of his, he veil'd
His face with the other, and at once, as falls
A creeper when the prop is broken, fell
The woman shrieking at his feet, and swoon'd.
Then her own people bore along the nave
Her pendent hands, and narrow meagre face
Seam'd with the shallow cares of fifty years:
And her the Lord of all the landscape round
Ev'n to its last horizon, and of all
Who peer'd at him so keenly, follow'd out

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Tall and erect, but in the middle aisle
Reel'd, as a footsore ox in crowded ways
Stumbling across the market to his death,
Unpitied; for he groped as blind, and seem'd
Always about to fall, grasping the pews
And oaken finials till he touch'd the door;
Yet to the lychgate, where his chariot stood,
Strode from the porch, tall and erect again.

But nevermore did either pass the gate
Save under pall with bearers. In one month,
Thro' weary and yet ever wearier hours,
The childless mother went to seek her child;
And when he felt the silence of his house
About him, and the change and not the change,
And those fixt eyes of painted ancestors
Staring for ever from their gilded walls
On him their last descendant, his own head
Began to droop, to fall; the man became
Imbecile; his one word was "desolate;"
Dead for two years before his death was he;
But when the second Christmas came, escaped
His keepers, and the silence which he felt,
To find a deeper in the narrow gloom
By wife and child; nor wanted at his end
The dark retinue reverencing death
At golden thresholds; nor from tender hearts,
And those who sorrow'd o'er a vanish'd race,
Pity, the violet on the tyrant's grave.
Then the great Hall was wholly broken down,
And the broad woodland parcell'd into farms;
And where the two contrived their daughter's good,
Lies the hawk's cast, the mole has made his run,
The hedgehog underneath the plantain bores,
The rabbit fondles his own harmless face,
The slow-worm creeps, and the thin weasel there
Follows the mouse, and all is open field.

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SEA DREAMS.

A CITY clerk, but gently born and bred;
His wife, an unknown artist's orphan child—
One babe was theirs, a Margaret, three years old:
They, thinking that her clear germander eye
Droopt in the giant-factoried city-gloom,
Came, with a month's leave given them, to the sea:
For which his gains were dock'd, however small:
Small were his gains, and hard his work; besides,
Their slender household fortunes (for the man
Had risk'd his little) like the little thrift,
Trembled in perilous places o'er a deep:
And oft, when sitting all alone, his face
Would darken, as he cursed his credulousness,
And that one unctuous mouth which lured him, rogue,
To buy strange shares in some Peruvian mine.
Now seaward-bound for health they gain'd a coast,
All sand and cliff and deep-inrunning cave,
At close of day; slept, woke, and went the next,
The Sabbath, pious variers from the church,
To chapel; where a heated pulpiteer,
Not preaching simple Christ to simple men,
Announced the coming doom, and fulminated
Against the scarlet woman and her creed:
For sideways up he swung his arms, and shriek'd
"Thus, thus with violence," ev'n as if he held
The Apocalyptic millstone, and himself
Were that great Angel; "Thus with violence
Shall Babylon be cast into the sea;
Then comes the close." The gentle-hearted wife
Sat shuddering at the ruin of a world;
He at his own: but when the wordy storm
Had ended, forth they came and paced the shore,
Ran in and out the long sea-framing caves,
Drank the large air, and saw, but scarce believed
(The sootflake of so many a summer still
Clung to their fancies) that they saw, the sea.

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So now on sand they walk'd, and now on cliff,
Lingering about the thymy promontories,
Till all the sails were darken'd in the west,
And rosed in the east: then homeward and to bed:
Where she, who kept a tender Christian hope
Haunting a holy text, and still to that
Returning, as the bird returns, at night,
"Let not the sun go down upon your wrath,"
Said, "Love, forgive him:" but he did not speak;
And silenced by that silence lay the wife,
Remembering her dear Lord who died for all,
And musing on the little lives of men,
And how they mar this little by their feuds.

But while the two were sleeping, a full tide
Rose with ground-swell, which, on the foremost rocks
Touching, upjetted in spirts of wild sea-smoke,
And scaled in sheets of wasteful foam, and fell
In vast sea-cataracts—ever and anon
Dead claps of thunder from within the cliffs
Heard thro' the living roar. At this the babe,
Their Margaret cradled near them, wail'd and woke
The mother, and the father suddenly cried,
"A wreck, a wreck!" then turn'd, and groaning said,

"Forgive! How many will say, 'forgive,' and find
A sort of absolution in the sound
To hate a little longer! No; the sin
That neither God nor man can well forgive,
Hypocrisy, I saw it in him at once.
Is it so true that second thoughts are best?
Not first, and third, which are a riper first?
Too ripe, too late! they come too late for use.
Ah love, there surely lives in man and beast
Something divine to warn them of their foes:
And such a sense, when first I fronted him,
Said, 'Trust him not;' but after, when I came
To know him more, I lost it, knew him less;
Fought with what seem'd my own uncharity;
Sat at his table; drank his costly wines;

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Made more and more allowance for his talk;
Went further, fool! and trusted him with all,
All my poor scrapings from a dozen years
Of dust and deskwork: there is no such mine,
None; but a gulf of ruin, swallowing gold,
Not making. Ruin'd! ruin'd! the sea roars
Ruin: a fearful night!"

"Not fearful; fair,"
Said the good wife, "if every star in heaven
Can make it fair: you do but hear the tide.
Had you ill dreams?"

"O yes," he said, "I dream'd
Of such a tide swelling toward the land,
And I from out the boundless outer deep
Swept with it to the shore, and enter'd one
Of those dark caves that run beneath the cliffs.
I thought the motion of the boundless deep
Bore thro' the cave, and I was heaved upon it
In darkness: then I saw one lovely star
Larger and larger. "What a world," I thought,
"To live in!" but in moving on I found
Only the landward exit of the cave,
Bright with the sun upon the stream beyond:
And near the light a giant woman sat,
All over earthy, like a piece of earth,
A pickaxe in her hand: then out I slipt
Intc a land all sun and blossom, trees
As high as heaven, and every bird that sings:
And here the night-light flickering in my eyes
Awoke me."

"That was then your dream," she said,
"Not sad, but sweet."

"So sweet, I lay," said he,
"And mused upon it, drifting up the stream
In fancy, till I slept again, and pieced
The broken vision; for I dream'd that still

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The motion of the great deep bore me on,
And that the woman walk'd upon the brink:
I wonder'd at her strength, and ask'd her of it:
'It came,' she said, 'by working in the mines:'
O then to ask her of my shares, I thought;
And ask'd; but not a word; she shook her head.
And then the motion of the current ceased,
And there was rolling thunder; and we reach'd
A mountain, like a wall of burs and thorns;
But she with her strong feet up the steep hill
Trod out a path: I follow'd; and at top
She pointed seaward: there a fleet of glass,
That seem'd a fleet of jewels under me,
Sailing along before a gloomy cloud
That not one moment ceased to thunder, past
In sunshine: right across its track there lay,
Down in the water, a long reef of gold,
Or what seem'd gold: and I was glad at first
To think that in our often-ransack'd world
Still so much gold was left; and then I fear'd
Lest the gay navy there should splinter on it,
And fearing waved my arm to warn them off;
An idle signal, for the brittle fleet
(I thought I could have died to save it) near'd,
Touch'd, clink'd, and clash'd, and vanish'd, and I woke,
I heard the clash so clearly. Now I see
My dream was Life; the woman honest Work;
And my poor venture but a fleet of glass
Wreck'd on a reef of visionary gold."

"Nay," said the kindly wife to comfort him,
"You raised your arm, you tumbled down and broke
The glass with little Margaret's medicine in it;
And, breaking that, you made and broke your dream:
A trifle makes a dream, a trifle breaks."

"No trifle," groan'd the husband; "yesterday
I met him suddenly in the street, and ask'd
That which I ask'd the woman in my dream.
Like her he shook his head. 'Show me the books!'

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He dodged me with a long and loose account.
'The books, the books!' but he, he could not wait,
Bound on a matter he of life and death:
When the great Books (see Daniel seven and ten)
Were open'd, I should find he meant me well;
And then began to bloat himself, and ooze
All over with the fat affectionate smile
That makes the widow lean. 'My dearest friend,
Have faith, have faith! We live by faith,' said he;
'And all things work together for the good
Of those'—it makes me sick to quote him—last
Gript my hand hard, and with God-bless-you went.
I stood like one that had received a blow:
I found a hard friend in his loose accounts,
A loose one in the hard grip of his hand,
A curse in his God-bless-you: then my eyes
Pursued him down the street, and far away,
Among the honest shoulders of the crowd,
Read rascal in the motions of his back,
And scoundrel in the supple-sliding knee."

"Was he so bound, poor soul?" said the good wife;
"So are we all: but do not call him, love,
Before you prove him, rogue, and proved, forgive.
His gain is loss; for he that wrongs his friend
Wrongs himself more, and ever bears about
A silent court of justice in his breast,
Himself the judge and jury, and himself
The prisoner at the bar, ever condemn'd:
And that drags down his life: then comes what comes
Hereafter: and he meant, he said he meant,
Perhaps he meant, or partly meant, you well."

"'With all his conscience and one eye askew'—
Love, let me quote these lines, that you may learn
A man is likewise counsel for himself,
Too often, in that silent court of yours—
'With all his conscience and one eye askew,
So false, he partly took himself for true;
Whose pious talk, when most his heart was dry,

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Made wet the crafty crowsfoot round his eye;
Who, never naming God except for gain,
So never took that useful name in vain;
Made Him his catspaw and the Cross his tool,
And Christ the bait to trap his dupe and fool;
Nor deeds of gift, but gifts of grace he forged,
And snakelike slimed his victim ere he gorged;
And oft at Bible meetings, o'er the rest
Arising, did his holy oily best,
Dropping the too rough H in Hell and Heaven,
To spread the Word by which himself had thriven.'
How like you this old satire?"

"Nay," she said,
"I loathe it: he had never kindly heart,
Nor ever cared to better his own kind,
Who first wrote satire, with no pity in it.
But will you hear *my* dream, for I had one
That altogether went to music? Still
It awed me."

Then she told it, having dream'd
Of that same coast.

"—But round the North, a light,
A belt, it seem'd, of luminous vapor, lay,
And ever in it a low musical note
Swell'd up and died; and, as it swell'd, a ridge
Of breaker issued from the belt, and still
Grew with the growing note, and when the note
Had reach'd a thunderous fullness, on those cliffs
Broke, mixt with awful light (the same as that
Living within the belt) whereby she saw
That all those lines of cliffs were cliffs no more,
But huge cathedral fronts of every age,
Grave, florid, stern, as far as eye could see,
One after one: and then the great ridge drew,
Lessening to the lessening music, back,
And past into the belt and swell'd again
Slowly to music: ever when it broke

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The statues, king or saint, or founder fell;
Then from the gaps and chasms of ruin left
Came men and women in dark clusters round,
Some crying, 'Set them up! they shall not fall!'
And others 'Let them lie, for they have fall'n.'
And still they strove and wrangled: and she grieved
In her strange dream, she knew not why, to find
Their wildest wailings never out of tune
With that sweet note; and ever as their shrieks
Ran highest up the gamut, that great wave
Returning, while none mark'd it, on the crowd
Broke, mixt with awful light, and show'd their eyes
Glaring, and passionate looks, and swept away
The men of flesh and blood, and men of stone,
To the waste deeps together.

"Then I fixt
My wistful eyes on two fair images,
Both crown'd with stars and high among the stars,—
The Virgin Mother standing with her child
High up on one of those dark minster-fronts—
Till she began to totter, and the child
Clung to the mother, and sent out a cry
Which mixt with little Margaret's, and I woke,
And my dream awed me:—well—but what are dreams?
Yours came but from the breaking of a glass,
And mine but from the crying of a child."

"Child? No!" said he, "but this tide's roar, and his,
Our Boanerges with his threats of doom,
And loud-lung'd Antibabylonianisms
(Altho' I grant but little music there)
Went both to make your dream: but if there were
A music harmonizing our wild cries,
Sphere-music such as that you dream'd about,
Why, that would make our passions far too like
The discords dear to the musician. No—
One shriek of hate would jar all the hymns of heaven
True Devils with no ear, they howl in tune
With nothing but the Devil!"

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"'True' indeed!
One of our town, but later by an hour
Here than ourselves, spoke with me on the shore;
While you were running down the sands, and made
The dimpled flounce of the sea-furbelow flap,
Good man, to please the child. She brought strange news.
Why were you silent when I spoke to-night?
I had set my heart on your forgiving him
Before you knew. We *must* forgive the dead."

"Dead! who is dead?"

"The man your eye pursued.
A little after you had parted with him,
He suddenly dropt dead of heart-disease."

"Dead? he? of heart-disease? what heart had he
To die of? dead!"

"Ah, dearest, if there be
A devil in man, there is an angel too,
And if he did that wrong you charge him with,
His angel broke his heart. But your rough voice
(You spoke so loud) has roused the child again.
Sleep, little birdie, sleep! will she not sleep
Without her 'little birdie?' well then, sleep,
And I will sing you 'birdie.'"

Saying this,
The woman half turn'd round from him she loved,
Left him one hand, and reaching thro' the night
Her other, found (for it was close beside)
And half embraced the basket cradle-head
With one soft arm, which, like the pliant bough
That moving moves the nest and nestling, sway'd
The cradle, while she sang this baby song.

What does little birdie say
In her nest at peep of day?
Let me fly, says little birdie,
Mother, let me fly away.

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Birdie, rest a little longer,
Till the little wings are stronger.
So she rests a little longer,
Then she flies away.

What does little baby say,
In her bed at peep of day?
Baby says, like little birdie,
Let me rise and fly away.
Baby, sleep a little longer,
Till the little limbs are stronger.
If she sleeps a little longer,
Baby too shall fly away.

"She sleeps: let us too, let all evil, sleep.
He also sleeps—another sleep than ours.
He can do no more wrong: forgive him, dear,
And I shall sleep the sounder!"

Then the man,
"His deeds yet live, the worst is yet to come.
Yet let your sleep for this one night be sound:
I do forgive him!"

"Thanks, my love," she said,
"Your own will be the sweeter," and they slept.

THE BROOK.

HERE, by this brook, we parted; I to the East
And he for Italy—too late—too late:
One whom the strong sons of the world despise;
For lucky rhymes to him were scrip and share,
And mellow metres more than cent for cent;
Nor could he understand how money breeds,
Thought it a dead thing; yet himself could make
The thing that is not as the thing that is.
O had he lived! In our schoolbooks we say,
Of those that held their heads above the crowd,
They flourish'd then or then; but life in him
Could scarce be said to flourish, only touch'd
On such a time as goes before the leaf,

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When all the wood stands in a mist of green,
And nothing perfect: yet the brook he loved,
For which, in branding summers of Bengal,
Or ev'n the sweet half-English Neilgherry air,
I panted, seems, as I re-listen to it,
Prattling the primrose fancies of the boy,
To me that loved him; for 'O brook,' he says,
'O babbling brook,' says Edmund in his rhyme,
'Whence come you? and the brook, why not? replies:

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

"Poor lad, he died at Florence, quite worn out,
Travelling to Naples. There is Darnley bridge,
It has more ivy; there the river; and there
Stands Philip's farm where brook and river meet.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

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"But Philip chatter'd more than brook or bird:
Old Philip; all about the fields you caught
His weary daylong chirping, like the dry
High-elbow'd grigs that leap in summer grass.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

"O darling Katie Willows, his one child!
A maiden of our century, yet most meek;
A daughter of our meadows, yet not coarse;
Straight, but as lissome as a hazel wand;
Her eyes a bashful azure, and her hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
Divides threefold to show the fruit within.

"Sweet Katie, once I did her a good turn,
Her and her far-off cousin and betrothed,
James Willows, of one name and heart with her.
For here I came, twenty years back—the week
Before I parted with poor Edmund; crost
By that old bridge which, half in ruins then,
Still makes a hoary eyebrow for the gleam
Beyond it, where the waters marry—crost,
Whistling a random bar of Bonny Doon,
And push'd at Philip's garden-gate. The gate,
Half-parted from a weak and scolding hinge,
Stuck; and he clamor'd from a casement, 'Run,'

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To Katie somewhere in the walks below,
'Run, Katie!' Katie never ran: she moved
To meet me, winding under woodbine bowers,
A little flutter'd, with her eyelids down,
Fresh apple-blossom, blushing for a boon.

"What was it? less of sentiment than sense
Had Katie; not illiterate; nor of those
Who dabbling in the fount of fictive tears,
And nursed by mealy-mouth'd philanthropies,
Divorce the Feeling from her mate the Deed.

"She told me. She and James had quarrell'd. Why?
What cause of quarrel? None, she said, no cause;
James had no cause: but when I prest the cause,
I learnt that James had flickering jealousies
Which anger'd her. Who anger'd James? I said.
But Katie snatch'd her eyes at once from mine,
And sketching with her slender pointed foot
Some figure like a wizard pentagram
On garden gravel, let my query pass
Unclaim'd, in flushing silence, till I ask'd
If James were coming. 'Coming every day,'
She answer'd, 'ever longing to explain,
But evermore her father came across
With some long-winded tale, and broke him short;
And James departed vext with him and her.'
How could I help her? 'Would I—was it wrong?'
(Clasp't hands and that petitionary grace
Of sweet seventeen subdued me ere she spoke)
'O would I take her father for one hour,
For one half-hour, and let him talk to me!'
And even while she spoke, I saw where James
Made toward us, like a wader in the surf,
Beyond the brook, waist-deep in meadow-sweet.

"O Katie, what I suffer'd for your sake!
For in I went, and call'd old Philip out
To show the farm: full willingly he rose:
He led me thro' the short sweet-smelling lanes

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Of his wheat-suburb, babbling as he went.
He praised his land, his horses, his machines;
He praised his ploughs, his cows, his hogs, his dogs;
He praised his hens, his geese, his guinea-hens;
His pigeons, who in session on their roofs
Approved him, bowing at their own deserts:
Then from the plaintive mother's teat he took
Her blind and shuddering puppies, naming each,
And naming those, his friends, for whom they were;
Then crost the common into Darnley chase
To show Sir Arthur's deer. In copse and fern
Twinkled the innumerable ear and tail.
Then, seated on a serpent-rooted beech,
He pointed out a pasturing colt, and said:
"That was the four-year-old I sold the Squire."
And there he told a long long-winded tale
Of how the Squire had seen the colt at grass,
And how it was the thing his daughter wish'd,
And how he sent the bailiff to the farm
To learn the price, and what the price he ask'd,
And how the bailiff swore that he was mad,
But he stood firm; and so the matter hung;
He gave them line: and five days after that
He met the bailiff at the Golden Fleece,
Who then and there had offer'd something more,
But he stood firm; and so the matter hung;
He knew the man; the colt would fetch its price;
He gave them line: and how by chance at last
(It might be May or April, he forgot,
The last of April or the first of May)
He found the bailiff riding by the farm,
And, talking from the point, he drew him in,
And there he mellow'd all his heart with ale,
Until they closed a bargain, hand in hand.

"Then, while I breathed in sight of haven, he,
Poor fellow, could he help it? recommenced,
And ran thro' all the coltish chronicle,
Wild Will, Black Bess, Tantivy, Tallyho,
Reform, White Rose, Bellerophon, the Jilt.

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Arbaces, and Phenomenon, and the rest,
Till, not to die a listener, I arose,
And with me Philip, talking still; and so
We turn'd our foreheads from the falling sun,
And following our own shadows thrice as long
As when they follow'd us from Philip's door,
Arrived, and found the sun of sweet content
Re-risen in Katie's eyes, and all things well.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
I slide by hazel covers;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses;
I linger by my shingly bars;
I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

Yes, men may come and go; and these are gone,
All gone. My dearest brother, Edmund, sleeps,
Not by the well-known stream and rustic spire,
But unfamiliar Arno, and the dome
Of Brunelleschi; sleeps in peace: and he,
Poor Philip, of all his lavish waste of words
Remains the lean P. W. on his tomb:
I scraped the lichen from it: Katie walks
By the long wash of Australasian seas
Far off, and holds her head to other stars,
And breathes in converse seasons. All are gone."

So Lawrence Aylmer, seated on a style
In the long hedge, and rolling in his mind
Old waifs of rhyme, and bowing o'er the brook

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A tonsured head in middle age forlorn,
Mused, and was mute. On a sudden a low breath
Of tender air made tremble in the hedge
The fragile bindweed-bells and briony rings;
And he look'd up. There stood a maiden near,
Waiting to pass. In much amaze he stared
On eyes a bashful azure, and on hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
Divides threefold to show the fruit within:
Then, wondering, ask'd her "Are you from the farm?"
"Yes" answer'd she. "Pray stay a little: pardon me;
What do they call you?" "Katie." "That were strange.
What surname?" "Willows." "No!" "That is my name."
"Indeed!" and here he look'd so self-perplext,
That Katie laugh'd, and laughing blush'd, till he
Laugh'd also, but as one before he wakes,
Who feels a glimmering strangeness in his dream.
Then looking at her; "Too happy, fresh and fair,
Too fresh and fair in our sad world's best bloom,
To be the ghost of one who bore your name
About these meadows, twenty years ago."

"Have you not heard?" said Katie, "we came back.
We bought the farm we tenanted before.
Am I so like her? so they said on board.
Sir, if you knew her in her English days,
My mother, as it seems you did, the days
That most she loves to talk of, come with me.
My brother James is in the harvest-field:
But she—you will be welcome—O, come in!"

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ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

I.

BURY the Great Duke
With an empire's lamentation.
Let us bury the Great Duke
To the noise of the mourning of a mighty nation,
Mourning when their leaders fall,
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II.

Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore?
Here, in streaming London's central roar.
Let the sound of those he wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bones for evermore.

III.

Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,
As fits an universal woe,
Let the long long procession go,
And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,
And let the mournful martial music blow;
The last great Englishman is low.

IV.

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
Remembering all his greatness in the Past.
No more in soldier fashion will he greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute:
Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,
The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute,
Whole in himself, a common good.
Mourn for the man of amplest influence,
Yet clearest of ambitious crime,

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Our greatest yet with least pretence,
Great in council and great in war,
Foremost captain of his time,
Rich in saving common-sense,
And, as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.
O good gray head which all men knew,
O voice from which their omens all men drew,
O iron nerve to true occasion true,
O fall'n at length that tower of strength
Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew!
Such was he whom we deplore.
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
The great World-victor's victor will be seen no more.

v.

All is over and done:
Render thanks to the Giver,
England, for thy son.
Let the bell be toll'd.
Render thanks to the Giver,
And render him to the mould.
Under the cross of gold
That shines over city and river,
There he shall rest for ever
Among the wise and the bold.
Let the bell be toll'd:
And a reverent people behold
The towering car, the sable steeds:
Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,
Dark in its funeral fold.
Let the bell be toll'd:
And a deeper knell in the heart be knoll'd;
And the sound of the sorrowing anthem roll'd
Thro' the dome of the golden cross;
And the volleying cannon thunder his loss;
He knew their voices of old.
For many a time in many a clime
His captain's-ear has heard them boom
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom:

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When he with those deep voices wrought,
Guarding realms and kings from shame;
With those deep voices our dead captain taught
The tyrant, and asserts his claim
In that dread sound to the great name,
Which he has worn so pure of blame,
In praise and in dispraise the same,
A man of well-attemper'd frame.
O civic muse, to such a name,
To such a name for ages long,
To such a name,
Preserve a broad approach of fame,
And ever-echoing avenues of song.

VI.

Who is he that cometh, like an honor'd guest,
With banner and with music, with soldier and with priest,
With a nation weeping, and breaking on my rest?
Mighty Seaman, this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea.
Thine island loves thee well, thou famous man,
The greatest sailor since our world began.
Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
To thee the greatest soldier comes;
For this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea;
His foes were thine; he kept us free;
O give him welcome, this is he
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
And worthy to be laid by thee;
For this is England's greatest son,
He that gain'd a hundred fights,
Nor ever lost an English gun;
This is he that far away
Against the myriads of Assaye
Clash'd with his fiery few and won;
And underneath another sun,
Warring on a later day,
Round affrighted Lisbon drew
The treble works, the vast designs

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Of his labor'd rampart-lines,
Where he greatly stood at bay,
Whence he issued forth anew,
And ever great and greater grew,
Beating from the wasted vines
Back to France her banded swarms,
Back to France with countless blows,
Till o'er the hills her eagles flew
Beyond the Pyrenean pines,
Follow'd up in valley and glen
With blare of bugle, clamor of men,
Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
And England pouring on her foes.
Such a war had such a close.
Again their ravening eagle rose
In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing wings,
And barking for the thrones of kings;
Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown
On that loud sabbath shook the spoiler down;
A day of onsets of despair!
Dash'd on every rocky square
Their surging charges foam'd themselves away;
Last, the Prussian trumpet blew;
Thro' the long-tormented air
Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,
And down we swept and charged and overthrew.
So great a soldier taught us there,
What long-enduring hearts could do
In that world-earthquake, Waterloo!
Mighty Seaman, tender and true,
And pure as he from taint of craven guile,
O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,
O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,
If aught of things that here befall
Touch a spirit among things divine,
If love of country move thee there at all,
Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine!
And thro' the centuries let a people's voice
In full acclaim,
A people's voice,

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The proof and echo of all human fame,
A people's voice, when they rejoice
At civic revel and pomp and game,
Attest their great commander's claim
With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,
Eternal honor to his name.

VII.

A people's voice! we are a people yet.
Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forget,
Confus'd by brainless mobs and lawless Powers;
Thank Him who isled us here, and roughly set
His Briton in blown seas and storming showers,
We have a voice, with which to pay the debt
Of boundless love and reverence and regret
To those great men who fought, and kept it ours.
And keep it ours, O God, from brute control;
O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul
Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,
And save the one true seed of freedom sown
Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
That sober freedom out of which there springs
Our loyal passion for our temperate kings;
For, saving that, ye help to save mankind
Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,
And drill the raw world for the march of mind,
Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be just.
But wink no more in slothful overtrust.
Remember him who led your hosts;
He bad you guard the sacred coasts.
Your cannons moulder on the seaward wall;
His voice is silent in your council-hall
For ever; and whatever tempests lour
For ever silent; even if they broke
In thunder, silent; yet remember all
He spoke among you, and the Man who spoke;
Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,
Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power;
Who let the turbid streams of rumor flow
Thro' either babbling world of high and low;

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Whose life was work, whose language rife
With rugged maxims hewn from life;
Who never spoke against a foe;
Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke
All great self-seekers trampling on the right:
Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named;
Truth-lover was our English Duke;
Whatever record leap to light
He never shall be shamed.

VIII.

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars
Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
Follow'd by the brave of other lands,
He, on whom from both her open hands
Lavish Honor shower'd all her stars,
And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn.
Yea, let all good things await
Him who cares not to be great,
But as he saves or serves the state.
Not once or twice in our rough island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory:
He that walks it, only thirsting
For the right, and learns to deaden
Love of self, before his journey closes,
He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
Into glossy purples, which outredden
All voluptuous garden-roses.
Not once or twice in our fair island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory:
He, that ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
His path upward, and prevail'd,
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon and sun.
Such was he: his work is done.
But while the races of mankind endure,
Let his great example stand

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Colossal, seen of every land,
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure:
Till in all lands and thro' all human story
The path of duty be the way to glory:
And let the land whose hearths he saved from shame
For many and many an age proclaim
At civic revel and pomp and game,
And when the long-illumined cities flame
Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,
Eternal honor to his name.

IX.

Peace, his triumph will be sung
By some yet unmoulded tongue
Far on in summers that we shall not see:
Peace, it is a day of pain
For one about whose patriarchal knee
Late the little children clung:
O peace, it is a day of pain
For one, upon whose hand and heart and brain
Once the weight and fate of Europe hung.
Ours the pain, be his the gain!
More than is of man's degree
Must be with us, watching here
At this, our great solemnity.
Whom we see not we revere;
We revere, and we refrain
From talk of battles loud and vain,
And brawling memories all too free
For such a wise humility
As befits a solemn fane:
We revere, and while we hear
The tides of Music's golden sea
Setting toward eternity,
Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
Until we doubt not that for one so true
There must be other nobler work to do
Than when he fought at Waterloo,
And Victor he must ever be.

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For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
And break the shore, and evermore
Make and break, and work their will;
Tho' world on world in myriad myriads roll
Round us, each with different powers,
And other forms of life than ours,
What know we greater than the soul?
On God and Godlike men we build our trust.
Hush, the Dead March wails in the people's ears:
The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and tears:
The black earth yawns: the mortal disappears;
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
He is gone who seem'd so great.—
Gone; but nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own
Being here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in State,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave him.
Speak no more of his renown,
Lay your earthly fancies down,
And in the vast cathedral leave him.
God accept him, Christ receive him.

1852.

THE THIRD OF FEBRUARY, 1852.

MY Lords, we heard you speak: you told us all
That England's honest censure went too far;
That our free press should cease to brawl,
Not sting the fiery Frenchman into war.
It was our ancient privilege, my Lords,
To fling whate'er we felt, not fearing, into words.

We love not this French God, the child of Hell,
Wild War, who breaks the converse of the wise;

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But though we love kind Peace so well,
We dare not ev'n by silence sanction lies.
It might be safe our censures to withdraw;
And yet, my Lords, not well: there is a higher law.

As long as we remain, we must speak free,
Tho' all the storm of Europe on us break;
No little German state are we,
But the one voice in Europe: we *must* speak;
That if to-night our greatness were struck dead,
There might be left some record of the things we said.

If you be fearful, then must we be bold.
Our Britain cannot salve a tyrant o'er.
Better the waste Atlantic roll'd
On her and us and ours for evermore.
What! have we fought for Freedom from our prime,
At last to dodge and palter with a public crime?

Shall we fear *him*? our own we never fear'd.
From our first Charles by force we wrung our claims.
Prick'd by the Papal spur, we rear'd,
We flung the burthen of the second James.
I say, we *never* feared! and as for these,
We broke them on the land, we drove them on the seas.

And you, my Lords, you make the people muse
In doubt if you be of our Barons' breed—
Were those your sires who fought at Lewes?
Is this the manly strain of Runnymede?
O fall'n nobility, that, overawed,
Would lisp in honey'd whispers of this monstrous fraud

We feel, at least, that silence here were sin,
Not ours the fault if we have feeble hosts—
If easy patrons of their kin
Have left the last free race with naked coasts!
They knew the precious things they had to guard:
For us, we will not spare the tyrant one hard word.

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Tho' niggard throats of Manchester may bawl,
What England was, shall her true sons forget?
We are not cotton-spinners all,
But some love England and her honor yet.
And these in our Thermopylæ shall stand,
And hold against the world this honor of the land.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.

I.

HALF a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
"Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!" he said:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

II.

"Forward, the Light Brigade!"
Was there a man dismay'd?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blunder'd:
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

III.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volley'd and thunder'd;

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Storm'd at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.

IV.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turn'd in air
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wonder'd:
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
Shatter'd and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not
Not the six hundred.

V.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

VI.

When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
All the world wonder'd.
Honor the charge they made!
Honor the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred!

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ODE SUNG AT THE OPENING OF THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION.

I.

UPLIFT a thousand voices full and sweet,
In this wide hall with earth's invention stored,
And praise the invisible universal Lord,
Who lets once more in peace the nations meet,
Where Science, Art, and Labor have outpour'd
Their myriad horns of plenty at our feet.

II.

O silent father of our Kings to be
Mourn'd in this golden hour of jubilee,
For this, for all, we weep our thanks to thee!

III.

The world-compelling plan was thine,—
And, lo! the long laborious miles
Of Palace; lo! the giant aisles,
Rich in model and design;
Harvest-tool and husbandry,
Loom and wheel and enginery,
Secrets of the sullen mine,
Steel and gold, and corn and wine,
Fabric rough, or fairy-fine,
Sunny tokens of the Line,
Polar marvels, and a feast
Of wonder, out of West and East,
And shapes and hues of Art divine!
All of beauty, all of use,
That one fair planet can produce,
Brought from under every star,
Blown from over every main,
And mixt, as life is mixt with pain,
The works of peace with works of war.

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IV.

Is the goal so far away?
Far, how far no tongue can say,
Let us dream our dream to-day.

V.

O ye, the wise who think, the wise who reign,
From growing commerce loose her latest chain,
And let the fair white-wing'd peacemaker fly
To happy havens under all the sky,
And mix the seasons and the golden hours;
Till each man find his own in all men's good,
And all men work in noble brotherhood,
Breaking their mailed fleets and armed towers,
And ruling by obeying Nature's powers,
And gathering all the fruits of earth and crown'd with all her flowers.

A WELCOME TO ALEXANDRA.

MARCH 7, 1863.

SEA-KINGS' daughter from over the sea,
Alexandra!
Saxon and Norman and Dane are we,
But all of us Danes in our welcome of thee,
Alexandra!
Welcome her, thunders of fort and of fleet!
Welcome her, thundering cheer of the street!
Welcome her, all things youthful and sweet,
Scatter the blossom under her feet!
Break, happy land, into earlier flowers!
Make music, O bird, in the new-budded bowers!
Blazon your mottoes of blessing and prayer!
Welcome her, welcome her, all that is ours!
Warble, O bugle, and trumpet, blare!
Flags, flutter out upon turrets and towers!
Flames, on the windy headland flare!

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Utter your jubilee, steeple and spire!
Clash, ye bells, in the merry March air!
Flash, ye cities, in rivers of fire!
Rush to the roof, sudden rocket, and higher
Melt into stars for the land's desire!
Roll and rejoice, jubilant voice,
Roll as a ground-swell dash'd on the strand,
Roar as the sea when he welcomes the land,
And welcome her, welcome the land's desire,
The sea-kings' daughter as happy as fair,
Blissful bride of a blissful heir,
Bride of the heir of the kings of the sea—
O joy to the people and joy to the throne,
Come to us, love us and make us your own:
For Saxon or Dane or Norman we,
Teuton or Celt, or whatever we be,
We are each all Dane in our welcome of thee,
Alexandra!

A WELCOME TO THE DUCHESS OF EDINBURGH.

MARCH, 1874.

I.

THE Son of him with whom we strove for power—
Whose will is lord thro' all his world-domain—
Who made the serf a man, and burst his chain—
Has given our Prince his own Imperial Flower,
Alexandrovna.
And welcome, Russian flower, a people's pride,
To Britain, when her flowers begin to blow!
From love to love, from home to home you go,
From mother unto mother, stately bride,
Marie-Alexandrovna.

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II.

The golden news along the steppes is blown,
And at thy name the Tartar tents are stirred;
Elburz and all the Caucasus have heard;
And all the sultry palms of India known,
Alexandrovna.
The voices of our universal sea,
On capes of Afric as on cliffs of Kent,
The Maoris and that Isle of Continent,
And loyal pines of Canada murmur thee,
Marie-Alexandrovna.

III.

Fair empires branching, both, in lusty life!—
Yet Harold's England fell to Norman swords;
Yet thine own land has bow'd to Tartar hordes
Since English Harold gave its throne a wife,
Alexandrovna!
For thrones and peoples are as waifs that swing,
And float or fall, in endless ebb and flow;
But who love best have best the grace to know
That Love by right divine is deathless king,
Marie-Alexandrovna.

IV.

And Love has led thee to the stranger land,
Where men are bold and strongly say their say;
See, empire upon empire smiles to-day,
As thou with thy young lover hand-in-hand,
Alexandrovna!
So now thy fuller life is in the West,
Whose hand at home was gracious to thy poor:
Thy name was blest within the narrow door;
Here also, Marie, shall thy name be blest,
Marie-Alexandrovna!

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v.

Shall fears and jealous hatreds flame again?
Or at thy coming, Princess, everywhere,
The blue heaven break, and some diviner air
Breathe thro' the world and change the hearts of men,
Alexandrovna?
But hearts that change not, love that cannot cease,
And peace be yours, the peace of soul in soul!
And howsoever this wild world may roll,
Between your peoples truth and manful peace,
Alfred—Alexandrovna!

THE GRANDMOTHER.

I.

AND Willy, my eldest born, is gone, you say, little Anne?
Ruddy and white, and strong on his legs, he looks like a man.
And Willy's wife has written: she never was over-wise,
Never the wife for Willy: he wouldn't take my advice.

II.

For, Annie, you see, her father was not the man to save,
Hadn't a head to manage, and drank himself into his grave.
Pretty enough, very pretty! but I was against it for one.
Eh!—but he wouldn't hear me—and Willy, you say, is gone.

III.

Willy, my beauty, my eldest-born, the flower of the flock;
Never a man could fling him: for Willy stood like a rock.
"Here's a leg for a babe of a week!" says doctor; and he would be bound,
There was not his like that year in twenty parishes round.

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IV.

Strong of his hands, and strong on his legs, but still of his tongue!
I ought to have gone before him: I wonder he went so young.
I cannot cry for him, Annie: I have not long to stay;
Perhaps I shall see him the sooner, for he lived far away.

V.

Why do you look at me, Annie? you think I am hard and cold;
But all my children have gone before me, I am so old:
I cannot weep for Willy, nor can I weep for the rest;
Only at your age, Annie, I could have wept with the best.

VI.

For I remember a quarrel I had with your father, my dear,
All for a slanderous story, that cost me many a tear.
I mean your grandfather, Annie: it cost me a world of woe,
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy years ago.

VII.

For Jenny, my cousin, had come to the place, and I knew right well
That Jenny had tript in her time: I knew, but I would not tell.
And she to be coming and slandering me, the base little liar:
But the tongue is a fire as you know, my dear, the tongue is a fire.

VIII.

And the parson made it his text that week, and he said likewise,
That a lie which is half a truth is ever the blackest of lies,
That a lie which is all a lie may be met and fought with outright,
But a lie which is part a truth is a harder matter to fight.

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IX.

And Willy had not been down to the farm for a week and a day;
And all things look'd half-dead, tho' it was the middle of May.
Jenny, to slander me, who knew what Jenny had been!
But soiling another, Annie, will never make oneself clean.

X.

And I cried myself well-nigh blind, and all of an evening late
I climb'd to the top of the garth, and stood by the road at the gate.
The moon like a rick on fire was rising over the dale,
And whit, whit, whit, in the bush beside me chirrupt the nightingale.

XI.

All of a sudden he stopt: there past by the gate of the farm,
Willy,—he didn't see me,—and Jenny hung on his arm.
Out into the road I started, and spoke I scarce knew how;
Ah, there's no fool like the old one—it makes me angry now.

XII.

Willy stood up like a man, and look'd the thing that he meant;
Jenny, the viper, made me a mocking curtsey and went.
And I said, "Let us part: in a hundred years it'll all be the same,
You cannot love me at all, if you love not my good name."

XIII.

And he turn'd, and I saw his eyes all wet, in the sweet moonshine:
"Sweetheart, I love you so well that your good name is mine.
And what do I care for Jane, let her speak of you well or ill;
But marry me out of hand: we two shall be happy still."

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XIV.

"Marry you, Willy!" said I, "but I needs must speak my mind,
And I fear you'll listen to tales, be jealous and hard and unkind."
But he turn'd and claspt me in his arms, and answer'd, "No, love, no;"
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy years ago.

XV.

So Willy and I were wedded: I wore a lilac gown;
And the ringers rang with a will, and he gave the ringers a crown.
But the first that ever I bare was dead before he was born,
Shadow and shine is life, little Annie, flower and thorn.

XVI.

That was the first time, too, that ever I thought of death.
There lay the sweet little body that never had drawn a breath.
I had not wept, little Anne, not since I had been a wife;
But I wept like a child that day, for the babe had fought for his life.

XVII.

His dear little face was troubled, as if with anger or pain:
I look'd at the still little body—his trouble had all been in vain.
For Willy I cannot weep, I shall see him another morn:
But I wept like a child for the child that was dead before he was born.

XVIII.

But he cheer'd me, my good man, for he seldom said me nay:
Kind, like a man, was he; like a man, too, would have his way:
Never jealous—not he: we had many a happy year;
And he died, and I could not weep—my own time seem'd so near.

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XIX.

But I wish'd it had been God's will that I, too, then could have died:
I began to be tired a little, and fain had slept at his side.
And that was ten years back, or more, if I don't forget:
But as to the children, Annie, they're all about me yet.

XX.

Pattering over the boards, my Annie who left me at two,
Patter she goes, my own little Annie, an Annie like you:
Pattering over the boards, she comes and goes at her will,
While Harry is in the five-acre and Charlie ploughing the hill.

XXI.

And Harry and Charlie, I hear them too—they sing to their team:
Often they come to the door in a pleasant kind of a dream.
They come and sit by my chair, they hover about my bed—
I am not always certain if they be alive or dead.

XXII.

And yet I know for a truth, there's none of them left alive;
For Harry went at sixty, your father at sixty-five:
And Willy, my eldest born, at nigh threescore and ten;
I knew them all as babies, and now they're elderly men.

XXIII.

For mine is a time of peace, it is not often I grieve;
I am oftener sitting at home in my father's farm at eve:
And the neighbors come and laugh and gossip, and so do I;
I find myself often laughing at things that have long gone by.

XXIV.

To be sure the preacher says, our sins should make us sad:
But mine is a time of peace, and there is Grace to be had;
And God, not man, is the Judge of us all when life shall cease;
And in this Book, little Annie, the message is one of Peace.

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XXV.

And age is a time of peace, so it be free from pain,
And happy has been my life; but I would not live it again.
I seem to be tired a little, that's all, and long for rest;
Only at your age, Annie, I could have wept with the best.

XXVI.

So Willy has gone, my beauty, my eldest-born, my flower;
But how can I weep for Willy, he has but gone for an hour,—
Gone for a minute, my son, from this room into the next;
I, too, shall go in a minute. What time have I to be vext?

XXVII.

And Willy's wife has written, she never was over-wise.
Get me my glasses, Annie: thank God that I keep my eyes.
There is but a trifle left you, when I shall have past away.
But stay with the old woman now: you cannot have long to stay.

NORTHERN FARMER.

OLD STYLE.

I.

WHEER 'asta beän saw long and meä liggin' 'ere aloän?
Noorse? thoort nowt o' a noorse: whoy, Doctor's abeän an' agoän:
Says that I moänt 'a naw moor aäle: but I beänt a fool:
Git ma my aäle, fur I beänt a-gooin' to breäk my rule.

II.

Doctors, they knaws nowt, fur a says what's nawways true:
Naw soort o' koind o' use to saäy the things that a do.
I've 'ed my point o' aäle ivry noight sin' I beän 'ere,
An' I've 'ed my quart ivry market-noight for foorty year.

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III.

Parson's a beän loikewoise, an' a sittin 'ere o' my bed.
"The amoighty's a taäkin o' you to 'issén, my friend," a said,
An' a towd ma my sins, an's toithe were due, an' I gied it in hond;
I done moy duty boy 'um, as I 'a done boy the lond.

IV.

Larn'd a ma' beä. I reckons I 'annot sa mooch to larn.
But a cast oop, thot a did, 'boot Bessy Marris's barne.
Thaw a knaws I hallus voäted wi' Squoire an' choorch an' staäte,
An' i' the woost o' toimes I wur niver agin the raäte.

V.

An' I hallus coom'd to 's choorch afoor moy Sally wur deäd,
An' 'eerd 'um a bummin awaäy loike a buzzard-clock* ower my 'eäd,
An' I niver knaw'd whot a meän'd but I thowt a 'ad summut to saäy,
An' I thowt a said whot a owt to 'a said an' I coom'd awaäy.

VI.

Bessy Marris's barne! tha knaws she laäid it to meä.
Mowt a beän, mayhap, for she wur a bad un, sheä.
'Siver, I kep 'um, I kep 'um, my lass, tha mun understond;
I done moy duty boy 'um as I 'a done boy the lond.

VII.

But Parson a comes an' a goos, an' a says it eäsy an' freeä
"The amoighty's a taäkin o' you to 'issén, my friend," says 'eä.
I weänt saäy men be loiars, thaw summun said it in 'aäste:
But 'e reäds wonn sarmin a weeäk, an' I 'a stubb'd Thurnaby waäste.

VIII.

D'ya moind the waäste, my lass? naw, naw, tha was not born then;
Theer wur a boggle in it, I often 'eerd 'um mysen;

* Cockchafer.

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Moäst loike a butter-bump,* fur I 'eerd 'um aboot an' aboot,
But I stubb'd 'um oop wi' the lot, an' raäved an' rembled
'um oot.

IX.

Keäper's it wur; fo' they fun 'um theer a-laäid of 'is faäce
Doon i' the woild 'enemies† afoor I coom'd to the plaäce.
Noäks or Thimbleby—toäner 'ed shot 'um as deäd as a naäil.
Noäks wur 'ang'd for it oop at 'soize—but git ma my aäle.

X.

Dubbut loook at the waäste; theer warn't not feeäd for a
cow;
Nowt at all but bracken an' fuzz, an' loook at it now—
Warnt worth nowt a haäcre, an' now theer's lots of feeäd,
Fourscoor yows upon it an' some on it doon i' seeäd.

XI.

Nobbut a bit on it's left, an' I meän'd to 'a stubb'd it at fall,
Done it ta-year I meän'd, an' runn'd plough thruff it an' all,
If godamoighty an' parson 'ud nobbut let me aloän,
Meä, wi' haäte oondered haäcre o' Squoire's, an' lond o' my
oän.

XII.

Do godamoighty knaw what a's doing a taäkin o' meä?
I beänt wonn as saws 'ere a beän an' yonder a peä;
An' Squoire 'ull be sa mad an' all—a' dear a' dear!
And I 'a managed for Squoire coom Michaelmas thutty year.

XIII.

A mowt 'a taäen owd Joänes, as 'ant nor a 'aäpoth o' sense,
Or a mowt 'a taäen young Robins—a niver mended a fence:
But godamoighty a moost taäke meä an' taäke ma now
Wi' aäf the cows to cauve an' Thurnaby hoälms to plough!

XIV.

Loook 'ow quoloty smoiles when they seeäs ma a passin boy
Says to thessén naw doubt "what a man a beä sewer-loy!"

* Bittern. † Anemones.

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Fur they knaws what I beän to Squoire sin fust a coom'd to the 'All;
I done moy duty by Squoire an' I done moy duty boy hall.

XV.

Squoire's i' Lunnon, an' summun I reckons 'ull 'a to wroite,
For whoä's to howd the lond ater meä that muddles ma quoit;
Sartin-sewer I beä, thot a weänt niver give it to Joänes,
Naw, nor a moänt to Robins—a niver rembles the stoäns.

XVI.

But summun 'ull come ater meä mayhap wi' 'is kittle o' steäm
Huzzin' an' maäzin' the blessed feälds wi' the Divil's oän teäm.
Sin' I mun doy I mun doy, thaw loife they says is sweet,
But sin' I mun doy I mun doy, for I couldn abeär to see it.

XVII.

What atta stannin' theer fur, an' doesn bring ma the aäle?
Doctor's a 'toättler, lass, an a's hallus i' the owd taäle;
I weänt breäk rules fur Doctor, a knaws naw moor nor a floy;
Git ma my aäle I tell tha, an' if I mun doy I mun doy.

NORTHERN FARMER.

NEW STYLE.

I.

DOSN'T thou 'ear my 'erse's legs, as they canters awaäy?
Proputty, proputty, proputty—that's what I 'ears 'em saäy.
Proputty, proputty, proputty—Sam, thou's an ass for thy paäins:
Theer's moor sense i' one o' 'is legs nor in all thy braäins.

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II.

Woä—theer's a craw to pluck wi' tha, Sam: yon's parson's 'ouse—
Dosn't thou knaw that a man mun be eäther a man or a mouse?
Time to think on it then; for thou'll be twenty to weeäk.*
Proputty, proputty—woä then woä—let ma 'ear mysén speäk.

III.

Me an' thy muther, Sammy, 'as beän a-talkin' o' thee;
Thou's been talkin' to muther, an' she beän a tellin' it me.
Thou'll not marry for munny—thou's sweet upo' parson's lass—
Noä—thou'll marry for luvv—an' we boäth on us thinks tha an ass.

IV.

Seeä'd her todaäy goä by—Saäint's daäy—they was ringing the bells.
She's a beauty thou thinks—an' soä is scoors o' gells,
Them as 'as munny an' all—wot's a beauty?—the flower as blaws.
But proputty, proputty sticks, an' proputty, proputty graws.

V.

Doänt be stunt:† taäkè time: I knaws what maäkes tha sa mad.
Warn't I craäzed fur the lasses mysén when I wur a lad?
But I knaw'd a Quaäker feller as often 'as towd ma this:
"Doänt thou marry for munny, but goä wheer munny is!"

VI.

An' I went wheer munny war: an' thy mother coom to 'and,
Wi' lots o' munny laaïd by, an' a nicetish bit o' land.
Maäybe she warn't a beauty—I niver giv it a thowt—
But warn't she as good to cuddle an' kiss as a lass as 'ant nowt?

VII.

Parson's lass 'ant nowt, an' she weänt 'a nowt when 'e's deäd.
Mun be a guvness, lad, or summut, and addle‡ her breäd:

* This week. † Obstinate. ‡ Earn.

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Why? fur 'e's nobbut a curate, an' weänt nivir git naw 'igher;
An' 'e maäde the bed as 'e ligs on afoor 'e coom'd to the shire.

VIII.

An thin 'e coom'd to the parish wi' lots o 'Varsity debt,
Stook to his taaïl they did, an' 'e 'ant got shut on 'em yet.
An' 'e ligs on 'is back i' the grip, wi' noän to lend 'im a shove,
Woorse nor a far-welter'd* yowe; fur, Sammy, 'e married fur luvv.

IX.

Luvv? what's luvv? thou can luvv thy lass an' 'er munny too,
Maakin' 'em goä togither as they've good right to do.
Could'n I luvv thy muther by cause o' 'er munny laaïd by?
Naäy—fur I luvv'd 'er a vast sight moor fur it: reäson why.

X.

Ay an' thy muther says thou wants to marry the lass,
Cooms of a gentleman burn: an' we boäth on us thinks tha an ass.
Woä then, proputty, wiltha?—an ass as near as mays nowt†—
Woä then, wiltha? dangtha!—the bees is as fell as owt.‡

XI.

Breäk me a bit o' the esh for his 'eäd, lad, out o' the fence!
Gentleman burn! what's gentleman burn? is it shillins an' pence?
Proputty, proputty's ivrything 'ere, an', Sammy, I'm blest
If it isn't the saäme oop yonder, for them as 'as it's the best.

XII.

Tis'n them as 'as munny as breäks into 'ouses an' steäls,
Them as 'as coäts to their backs an' taäkes their regular meäls.
Noä, but it's them as niver knaws wheer a meäl's to be 'ad.
Taäke my word for it, Sammy, the poor in a loomp is bad.

* Or fow-welter'd,—said of a sheep lying on its back in the furrow.
† Makes nothing. ‡ The flies are as fierce as anything.

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XIII.

Them or thir feythers, tha sees, mun 'a beän a laäzy lot,
Fur work mun 'a gone to the gittin' whiniver munny was got.
Feyther 'ad ammost nowt; leästways 'is munny was 'id.
But 'e tued an' moil'd 'issén deäd, an 'e died a good un, 'e did.

XIV.

Loook thou theer wheer Wrigglesby beck comes out by the 'ill!
Feyther run oop to the farm, an' I runs oop to the mill;
An' I'll run oop to the brig, an' that thou'll live to see;
And if thou marries a good un I'll leäve the land to thee.

XV.

Thim's my noätions, Sammy, wheerby I means to stick;
But if thou marries a bad un, I'll leäve the land to Dick.—
Coom oop, proputty, proputty—that's what I 'ears 'im saäy—
Proputty, proputty, proputty—canter an' canter awaäy.

THE DAISY.

WRITTEN AT EDINBURGH.

O LOVE, what hours were thine and mine,
In lands of palm and southern pine;
In lands of palm, of orange-blossom,
Of olive, aloe, and maize and vine.

What Roman strength Turbia show'd
In ruin, by the mountain road;
How like a gem, beneath, the city
Of little Monaco, basking, glow'd.

How richly down the rocky dell
The torrent vineyard streaming fell
To meet the sun and sunny waters,
That only heaved with a summer swell.

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What slender campanili grew
By bays, the peacock's neck in hue;
  Where, here and there, on sandy beaches
A milky-bell'd amaryllis blew.

How young Columbus seem'd to rove,
Yet present in his natal grove,
  Now watching high on mountain cornice,
And steering, now, from a purple cove,

Now pacing mute by ocean's rim;
Till, in a narrow street and dim,
  I stay'd the wheels at Cogoletto,
And drank, and loyally drank to him.

Nor knew we well what pleased us most,
Not the clipt palm of which they boast;
  But distant color, happy hamlet,
A moulder'd citadel on the coast,

Or tower, or high hill-convent, seen
A light amid its olives green;
  Or olive-hoary cape in ocean;
Or rosy blossom in hot ravine,

Where oleanders flush'd the bed
Of silent torrents, gravel-spread;
  And, crossing, oft we saw the glisten
Of ice, far up on a mountain head.

We loved that hall, tho' white and cold,
Those niched shapes of noble mould,
  A princely people's awful princes,
The grave, severe Genovese of old.

At Florence too what golden hours,
In those long galleries, were ours;
  What drives about the fresh Cascinè,
Or walks in Boboli's ducal bowers.

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In bright vignettes, and each complete,
Of tower or duomo, sunny-sweet,
  Or palace, how the city glitter'd,
Thro' cypress avenues, at our feet.

But when we crost the Lombard plain
Remember what a plague of rain;
  Of rain at Reggio, rain at Parma;
At Lodi, rain, Piacenza, rain.

And stern and sad (so rare the smiles
Of sunlight) look'd the Lombard piles
  Porch-pillars on the lion resting,
And sombre, old, colonnaded aisles.

O Milan, O the chanting quires,
The giant windows' blazon'd fires,
  The height, the space, the gloom, the glory!
A mount of marble, a hundred spires!

I climb'd the roofs at break of day;
Sun-smitten Alps before me lay.
  I stood among the silent statues,
And statued pinnacles, mute as they.

How faintly-flush'd, how phantom-fair,
Was Monte Rosa, hanging there
  A thousand shadowy-pencill'd valleys
And snowy dells in a golden air.

Remember how we came at last
To Como; shower and storm and blast
  Had blown the lake beyond his limit,
And all was flooded; and how we past

From Como, when the light was gray,
And in my head, for half the day,
  The rich Virgilian rustic measure
Of Lari Maxume, all the way,

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Like ballad-burthen music, kept,
As on The Lariano crept
To that fair port below the castle
Of Queen Theodolind, where we slept;

Or hardly slept, but watch'd awake
A cypress in the moonlight shake,
The moonlight touching o'er a terrace
One tall Agavè above the lake.

What more? we took our last adieu,
And up the snowy Splugen drew,
But ere we reach'd the highest summit
I pluck'd a daisy, I gave it you.

It told of England then to me,
And now it tells of Italy.
O love, we two shall go no longer
To lands of summer across the sea;

So dear a life your arms enfold
Whose crying is a cry for gold:
Yet here to-night in this dark city,
When ill and weary, alone and cold,

I found, tho' crush'd to hard and dry,
This nurseling of another sky
Still in the little book you lent me,
And where you tenderly laid it by:

And I forgot the clouded Forth,
The gloom that saddens Heaven and Earth,
The bitter east, the misty summer
And gray metropolis of the North.

Perchance, to lull the throbs of pain,
Perchance, to charm a vacant brain,
Perchance, to dream you still beside me,
My fancy fled to the South again.

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TO THE REV. F. D. MAURICE.

COME, when no graver cares employ,
God-father, come and see your boy:
Your presence will be sun in winter,
Making the little one leap for joy.

For, being of that honest few,
Who give the Fiend himself his due,
Should eighty-thousand college-councils
Thunder "Anathema," friend, at you;

Should all our churchmen foam in spite
At you, so careful of the right,
Yet one lay-hearth would give you welcome
(Take it and come) to the Isle of Wight;

Where, far from noise and smoke of town,
I watch the twilight falling brown
All round a careless-order'd garden
Close to the ridge of a noble down.

You'll have no scandal while you dine,
But honest talk and wholesome wine,
And only hear the magpie gossip
Garrulous under a roof of pine:

For groves of pine on either hand,
To break the blast of winter, stand;
And further on, the hoary Channel
Tumbles a billow on chalk and sand;

Where, if below the milky steep
Some ship of battle slowly creep,
And on thro' zones of light and shadow
Glimmer away to the lonely deep,

We might discuss the Northern sin
Which made a selfish war begin;
Dispute the claims, arrange the chances;
Emperor, Ottoman, which shall win:

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Or whether war's avenging rod
Shall lash all Europe into blood;
  Till you should turn to dearer matters,
Dear to the man that is dear to God;

How best to help the slender store,
How mend the dwellings, of the poor;
  How gain in life, as life advances,
Valor and charity more and more.

Come, Maurice, come: the lawn as yet
Is hoar with rime, or spongy-wet;
  But when the wreath of March has blossom'd
Crocus, anemone, violet,

Or later, pay one visit here,
For those are few we hold as dear;
  Nor pay but one, but come for many,
Many and many a happy year.

January, 1854.

WILL.

I.

O WELL for him whose will is strong!
He suffers, but he will not suffer long;
He suffers, but he cannot suffer wrong:
For him nor moves the loud world's random mock,
Nor all Calamity's hugest waves confound,
Who seems a promontory of rock,
That, compass'd round with turbulent sound,
In middle ocean meets the surging shock,
Tempest-buffeted, citadel-crown'd.

II.

But ill for him who, bettering not with time,
Corrupts the strength of heaven-descended Will,

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And ever weaker grows thro' acted crime,
Or seeming-genial venial fault,
Recurring and suggesting still!
He seems as one whose footsteps halt,
Toiling in immeasurable sand,
And o'er a weary sultry land,
Far beneath a blazing vault,
Sown in a wrinkle of the monstrous hill,
The city sparkles like a grain of salt.

IN THE VALLEY OF CAUTERETZ.

ALL along the valley, stream that flashest white,
Deepening thy voice with the deepening of the night,
All along the valley, where thy waters flow,
I walk'd with one I loved two and thirty years ago.
All along the valley, while I walk'd to-day,
The two and thirty years were a mist that rolls away;
For all along the valley, down thy rocky bed
Thy living voice to me was as the voice of the dead,
And all along the valley, by rock and cave and tree,
The voice of the dead was a living voice to me.

THE FLOWER.

ONCE in a golden hour
I cast to earth a seed.
Up there came a flower,
The people said, a weed.

To and fro they went
Thro' my garden-bower,
And muttering discontent
Cursed me and my flower.

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Then it grew so tall
  It wore a crown of light,
But thieves from o'er the wall
  Stole the seed by night.

Sow'd it far and wide
  By every town and tower,
Till all the people cried,
  "Splendid is the flower."

Read my little fable:
  He that runs may read.
Most can raise the flowers now,
  For all have got the seed.

And some are pretty enough,
  And some are poor indeed;
And now again the people
  Call it but a weed.

REQUIESCAT.

FAIR is her cottage in its place,
  Where yon broad water sweetly slowly glides.
It sees itself from thatch to base
  Dream in the sliding tides.

And fairer she, but ah how soon to die!
  Her quiet dream of life this hour may cease.
Her peaceful being slowly passes by
  To some more perfect peace.

THE SAILOR BOY.

HE rose at dawn and, fired with hope,
  Shot o'er the seething harbor-bar,
And reach'd the ship and caught the rope,
  And whistled to the morning star.

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And while he whistled long and loud
He heard a fierce mermaiden cry,
"O boy, tho' thou art young and proud,
I see the place where thou wilt lie.

"The sands and yeasty surges mix
In caves about the dreary bay,
And on thy ribs the limpet sticks,
And in thy heart the scrawl shall play."

"Fool," he answer'd, "death is sure
To those that stay and those that roam,
But I will nevermore endure
To sit with empty hands at home.

"My mother clings about my neck,
My sisters crying, 'Stay for shame;'
My father raves of death and wreck,
They are all to blame, they are all to blame.

"God help me! save I take my part
Of danger on the roaring sea,
A devil rises in my heart,
Far worse than any death to me."

THE ISLET.

WHITHER, O whither, love, shall we go,
For a score of sweet little summers or so?"
The sweet little wife of the singer said,
On the day that follow'd the day she was wed,
"Whither, O whither, love, shall we go?"
And the singer shaking his curly head
Turn'd as he sat, and struck the keys
There at his right with a sudden crash,
Singing, "And shall it be over the seas
With a crew that is neither rude nor rash,
But a bevy of Eroses apple-cheek'd,
In a shallop of crystal ivory-beak'd,

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With a satin sail of a ruby glow,
To a sweet little Eden on earth that I know,
A mountain islet pointed and peak'd;
Waves on a diamond shingle dash,
Cataract brooks to the ocean run,
Fairily-delicate palaces shine
Mixt with myrtle and clad with vine,
And overstream'd and silvery-streak'd
With many a rivulet high against the Sun
The facets of the glorious mountain flash
Above the valleys of palm and pine."

"Thither, O thither, love, let us go."

"No, no, no!
For in all that exquisite isle, my dear,
There is but one bird with a musical throat,
And his compass is but of a single note,
That it makes one weary to hear."

"Mock me not! mock me not! love, let us go."

"No, love, no,
For the bud ever breaks into bloom on the tree,
And a storm never wakes on the lonely sea,
And a worm is there in the lonely wood,
That pierces the liver and blackens the blood;
And makes it a sorrow to be."

THE SPITEFUL LETTER.

HERE, it is here, the close of the year,
And with it a spiteful letter.
My name in song has done him much wrong,
For himself has done much better.

O little bard, is your lot so hard,
If men neglect your pages?
I think not much of yours or of mine,
I hear the roll of the ages.

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Rhymes and rhymes in the range of the times!
  Are mine for the moment stronger?
Yet hate me not, but abide your lot,
  I last but a moment longer.

This faded leaf, our names are as brief;
  What room is left for a hater?
Yet the yellow leaf hates the greener leaf,
  For it hangs one moment later.

Greater than I—is that your cry?
  And men will live to see it.
Well—if it be so—so it is, you know;
  And if it be so, so be it.

Brief, brief is a summer leaf,
  But this is the time of hollies.
O hollies and ivies and evergreens,
  How I hate the spites and the follies!

LITERARY SQUABBLES.

AH God! the petty fools of rhyme
  That shriek and sweat in pigmy wars
Before the stony face of Time,
And look'd at by the silent stars:

Who hate each other for a song,
And do their little best to bite
And pinch their brethren in the throng,
And scratch the very dead for spite:

And strain to make an inch of room
For their sweet selves, and cannot hear
The sullen Lethe rolling doom
On them and theirs and all things here·

When one small touch of Charity
Could lift them nearer God-like state

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Than if the crowded Orb should cry
Like those who cried Diana great:

And I too, talk, and lose the touch
I talk of. Surely, after all,
The noblest answer unto such
Is perfect stillness when they brawl.

THE VICTIM.

I.

A PLAGUE upon the people fell,
A famine after laid them low,
Then thorpe and byre arose in fire,
For on them brake the sudden foe;
So thick they died the people cried
"The Gods are moved against the land."
The Priest in horror about his altar
To Thor and Odin lifted a hand:
"Help us from famine
And plague and strife!
What would you have of us?
Human life?
Were it our nearest,
Were it our dearest,
(Answer, O answer)
We give you his life."

II.

But still the foeman spoil'd and burn'd,
And cattle died, and deer in wood,
And bird in air, and fishes turn'd
And whiten'd all the rolling flood;
And dead men lay all over the way,
Or down in a furrow scathed with flame:
And ever and aye the Priesthood moan'd
Till at last it seem'd that an answer came.

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"The King is happy
In child and wife;
Take you his dearest,
Give us a life."

III.

The Priest went out by heath and hill;
The King was hunting in the wild;
They found the mother sitting still;
She cast her arms about the child.
The child was only eight summers old,
His beauty still with his years increased,
His face was ruddy, his hair was gold,
He seem'd a victim due to the priest.
The Priest beheld him,
And cried with joy,
"The Gods have answer'd:
We give them the boy."

IV.

The King return'd from out the wild,
He bore but little game in hand;
The mother said "They have taken the child
To spill his blood and heal the land:
The land is sick, the people diseased,
And blight and famine on all the lea:
The holy Gods, they must be appeased,
So I pray you tell the truth to me.
They have taken our son,
They will have his life.
Is *he* your dearest?
Or I, the wife?"

V.

The King bent low, with hand on brow,
He stay'd his arms upon his knee:
"O wife, what use to answer now?
For now the Priest has judged for me."
The King was shaken with holy fear;
"The Gods," he said, "would have chosen well;

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Yet both are near, and both are dear,
And which the dearest I cannot tell!"
But the Priest was happy,
His victim won:
"We have his dearest,
His only son!"

VI.

The rites prepared, the victim bared,
The knife uprising toward the blow,
To the altar-stone she sprang alone,
"Me, not my darling, no!"
He caught her away with a sudden cry;
Suddenly from him brake his wife,
And shrieking "*I* am his dearest, I—
I am his dearest!" rush'd on the knife.
And the Priest was happy,
"O, Father Odin,
We give you a life.
Which was his nearest?
Who was his dearest?
The Gods have answer'd;
We give them the wife!"

WAGES.

GLORY of warrior, glory of orator, glory of song,
Paid with a voice flying by to be lost on an endless sea—
Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle, to right the wrong—
Nay, but she aim'd not at glory, no lover of glory she:
Give her the glory of going on, and still to be.

The wages of sin is death: if the wages of Virtue be dust,
Would she have heart to endure for the life of the worm and the fly?
She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet seats of the just,
To rest in a golden grove, or to bask in a summer sky:
Give her the wages of going on, and not to die.

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THE HIGHER PANTHEISM.

THE sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains—
Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who reigns?

Is not the Vision He? tho' He be not that which He seems?
Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live in dreams?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body and limb,
Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from Him?

Dark is the world to thee: thyself art the reason why;
For is He not all but thou, that hast power to feel "I am I?"

Glory about thee, without thee; and thou fulfillest thy doom,
Making Him broken gleams, and a stifled splendor and gloom.

Speak to Him thou for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet—
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.

God is law, say the wise; O Soul, and let us rejoice,
For if He thunder by law the thunder is yet his voice.

Law is God, say some: no God at all, says the fool;
For all we have power to see is a straight staff bent in a pool;

And the ear of man cannot hear, and the eye of man cannot see;
But if we could see and hear, this Vision—were it not He?

FLOWER in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but *if* I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

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THE VOICE AND THE PEAK.

THE voice and the Peak
Far over summit and lawn,
The lone glow and long roar
Green-rushing from the rosy thrones of dawn!

All night have I heard the voice
Rave over the rocky bar,
But thou wert silent in heaven,
Above thee glided the star.

Hast thou no voice, O Peak,
That standest high above all?
"I am the voice of the Peak,
I roar and rave for I fall.

"A thousand voices go
To North, South, East, and West;
They leave the heights and are troubled,
And moan and sink to their rest.

"The fields are fair beside them,
The chestnut towers in his bloom;
But they — they feel the desire of the deep —
Fall, and follow their doom.

"The deep has power on the height,
And the height has power on the deep;
They are raised for ever and ever,
And sink again into sleep."

Not raised for ever and ever,
But when their cycle is o'er,
The valley, the voice, the peak, the star,
Pass, and are found no more.

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The Peak is high and flush'd
At his highest with sunrise fire;
The Peak is high, and the stars are high,
And the thought of a man is higher.

A deep below the deep,
And a height beyond the height!
Our hearing is not hearing,
And our seeing is not sight.

The voice and the Peak
Far into heaven withdrawn,
The lone glow and long roar
Green-rushing from the rosy thrones of dawn!

IN THE GARDEN AT SWAINSTON.

NIGHTINGALES warbled without,
Within was weeping for thee:
Shadows of three dead men
Walk'd in the walks with me,
Shadows of three dead men, and thou wast one of the three.

Nightingales sang in his woods:
The Master was far away:
Nightingales warbled and sang
Of a passion that lasts but a day;
Still in the house in his coffin the Prince of courtesy lay.

Two dead men have I known
In courtesy like to thee:
Two dead men have I loved
With a love that ever will be:
Three dead men have I loved, and thou art last of the three.

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CHILD-SONGS.

I.

THE CITY CHILD.

DAINTY little maiden, whither would you wander?
Whither from this pretty home, the home where mother dwells?
"Far and far away," said the dainty little maiden,
"All among the gardens, auriculas, anemones,
Roses and lilies and Canterbury-bells."

Dainty little maiden, whither would you wander?
Whither from this pretty house, this city-house of ours?
"Far and far away," said the dainty little maiden,
"All among the meadows, the clover and the clematis,
Daisies and kingcups and honeysuckle-flowers."

II.

MINNIE AND WINNIE.

MINNIE and Winnie
Slept in a shell.
Sleep, little ladies!
And they slept well.

Pink was the shell within,
Silver without;
Sounds of the great sea
Wander'd about.

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Sleep, little ladies!
Wake not soon!
Echo on echo
Dies to the moon.

Two bright stars
Peep'd into the shell.
"What are they dreaming of?
Who can tell?"

Started a green linnet
Out of the croft;
Wake, little ladies,
The sun is aloft!

A DEDICATION.

DEAR, near and true—no truer Time himself
Can prove you, tho' he make you evermore
Dearer and nearer, as the rapid of life
Shoots to the fall—take this and pray that he,
Who wrote it, honoring your sweet faith in him,
May trust himself; and after praise and scorn,
As one who feels the immeasurable world,
Attain the wise indifference of the wise;
And after Autumn past—if left to pass
His autumn into seeming-leafless days—
Draw toward the long frost and longest night,
Wearing his wisdom lightly, like the fruit
Which in our winter woodland looks a flower.*

* The fruit of the Spindle-tree (*Euonymus Europæus*).

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EXPERIMENTS.

BOÄDICEA.

WHILE about the shore of Mona those Neronian legionaries
Burnt and broke the grove and altar of the Druid and Druidess,
Far in the East Boädicéa, standing loftily charioted,
Mad and maddening all that heard her in her fierce volubility,
Girt by half the tribes of Britain, near the colony Cámulodúne,
Yell'd and shriek'd between her daughters o'er a wild confederacy.

"They that scorn the tribes and call us Britain's barbarous populaces,
Did they hear me, would they listen, did they pity me supplicating?
Shall I heed them in their anguish? shall I brook to be supplicated?
Hear Icenian, Catieuchlanian, hear Coritanian, Trinobant!
Must their ever-ravening eagle's beak and talon annihilate us?
Tear the noble heart of Britain, leave it gorily quivering?
Bark an answer, Britain's raven! bark and blacken innumerable,
Blacken round the Roman carrion, make the carcase a skeleton,
Kite and kestrel, wolf and wolfkin, from the wilderness, wallow in it,
Till the face of Bel be brighten'd, Taranis be propitiated.
Lo their colony half-defended! lo their colony, Cámulodúne!
There the horde of Roman robbers mock at a barbarous adversary.

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There the hive of Roman liars worship a gluttonous emperor-idiot.
Such is Rome, and this her deity: hear it, Spirit of Cássivëlaún!

"Hear it, Gods! the Gods have heard it, O Icenian, C Coritanian!
Doubt not ye the Gods have answer'd, Catieuchlanian, Trinobant.
These have told us all their anger in miraculous utterances,
Thunder, a flying fire in heaven, a murmur heard aërially,
Phantom sound of blows descending, moan of an enemy massacred,
Phantom wail of women and children, multitudinous agonies.
Bloodily flow'd the Tamesa rolling phantom bodies of horses and men;
Then a phantom colony smoulder'd on the refluent estuary;
Lastly yonder yester-even, suddenly giddily tottering—
There was one who watch'd and told me—down their statue of Victory fell.
Lo their precious Roman bantling, lo the colony Cámulodúne,
Shall we teach it a Roman lesson? shall we care to be pitiful?
Shall we deal with it as an infant? shall we dandle it amorously?

"Hear Icenian, Catieuchlanian, hear Coritanian, Trinobant!
While I roved about the forest, long and bitterly meditating,
There I heard them in the darkness, at the mystical ceremony,
Loosely robed in flying raiment, sang the terrible prophetesses,
Fear not, isle of blowing woodland, isle of silvery parapets!
Tho' the Roman eagle shadow thee, tho' the gathering enemy narrow thee,
Thou shalt wax and he shall dwindle, thou shalt be the mighty one yet!
Thine the liberty, thine the glory, thine the deeds to be celebrated,

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Thine the myriad-rolling ocean, light and shadow illimitable,
Thine the lands of lasting summer, many-blossoming Paradises,
Thine the North and thine the South and thine the battle-thunder of God.'
So they chanted: how shall Britain light upon auguries happier?
So they chanted in the darkness, and there cometh a victory now.

"Hear Icenian, Catieuchlanian, hear Coritanian, Trinobant!
Me the wife of rich Prasútagus, me the lover of liberty,
Me they seized and me they tortured, me they lash'd and humiliated,
Me the sport of ribald Veterans, mine of ruffian violators!
See they sit, they hide their faces, miserable in ignominy!
Wherefore in me burns an anger, not by blood to be satiated.
Lo the palaces and the temple, lo the colony Cámulodúne!
There they ruled, and thence they wasted all the flourishing territory,
Thither at their will they haled the yellow-ringleted Britoness—
Bloodily, bloodily fall the battle-axe, unexhausted, inexorable.
Shout Icenian, Catieuchlanian, shout Coritanian, Trinobant,
Till the victim hear within and yearn to hurry precipitously
Like the leaf in a roaring whirlwind, like the smoke in a hurricane whirl'd.
Lo the colony, there they rioted in the city of Cúnobelíne!
There they drank in cups of emerald, there at tables of ebony lay,
Rolling on their purple couches in their tender effeminacy.
There they dwelt and there they rioted; there—there—they dwell no more.
Burst the gates, and burn the palaces, break the works of the statuary,
Take the hoary Roman head and shatter it, hold it abominable,

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Cut the Roman boy to pieces in his lust and voluptuousness,
Lash the maiden into swooning, me they lash'd and humiliated,
Chop the breasts from off the mother, dash the brains of the little one out,
Up my Britons, on my chariot, on my chargers, trample them under us."

So the Queen Boädicéa, standing loftily charioted,
Brandishing in her hand a dart and rolling glances lioness-like,
Yell'd and shriek'd between her daughters in her fierce volubility.
Till her people all around the royal chariot agitated,
Madly dash'd the darts together, writhing barbarous lineäments,
Made the noise of frosty woodlands, when they shiver in January,
Roar'd as when the rolling breakers boom and blanch on the precipices,
Yell'd as when the winds of winter tear an oak on a promontory.
So the silent colony hearing her tumultuous adversaries
Clash the darts and on the buckler beat with rapid unanimous hand,
Thought on all her evil tyrannies, all her pitiless avarice,
Till she felt the heart within her fall and flutter tremulously,
Then her pulses at the clamoring of her enemy fainted away.
Out of evil evil flourishes, out of tyranny tyranny buds.
Ran the land with Roman slaughter, multitudinous agonies
Perish'd many a maid and matron, many a valorous legionary.
Fell the colony, city, and citadel, London, Verulam, Cámulodúne.

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IN QUANTITY.

ON TRANSLATIONS OF HOMER.

Hexameters and Pentameters.

THESE lame hexameters the strong-wing'd music of Homer!
No—but a most burlesque barbarous experiment.
When was a harsher sound ever heard, ye Muses, in England?
When did a frog coarser croak upon our Helicon?
Hexameters no worse than daring Germany gave us,
Barbarous experiment, barbarous hexameters.

MILTON.

Alcaics.

O MIGHTY-MOUTH'D inventor of harmonies,
O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,
God-gifted organ-voice of England,
Milton, a name to resound for ages;
Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,
Starr'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armories,
Tower as the deep-domed empyrëan
Rings to the roar of an angel onset—
Me rather all that bowery loneliness,
The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring,
And bloom profuse and cedar arches
Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,
Where some refulgent sunset of India
Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,
And crimson-hued the stately palm-woods
Whisper in odorous heights of even.

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Hendecasyllabics.

O YOU chorus of indolent reviewers,
Irresponsible, indolent reviewers,
Look, I come to the test, a tiny poem
All composed in a metre of Catullus,
All in quantity, careful of my motion,
Like the skater on ice that hardly bears him,
Lest I fall unawares before the people,
Waking laughter in indolent reviewers.
Should I flounder awhile without a tumble
Thro' this metrification of Catullus,
They should speak to me not without a welcome,
All that chorus of indolent reviewers.
Hard, hard, hard is it, only not to tumble,
So fantastical is the dainty metre.
Wherefore slight me not wholly, nor believe me
Too presumptuous, indolent reviewers.
O blatant Magazines, regard me rather—
Since I blush to belaud myself a moment—
As some rare little rose, a piece of inmost
Horticultural art, or half coquette-like
Maiden, not to be greeted unbenignly.

SPECIMEN OF A TRANSLATION OF THE ILIAD IN BLANK VERSE.

SO Hector spake; the Trojans roar'd applause;
Then loosed their sweating horses from the yoke,
And each beside his chariot bound his own;
And oxen from the city, and goodly sheep
In haste they drove, and honey-hearted wine
And bread from out the houses brought, and heap'd
Their firewood, and the winds from off the plain
Roll'd the rich vapor far into the heaven.
And these all night upon the bridge* of war

* Or, ridge.

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Sat glorying; many a fire before them blazed:
As when in heaven the stars about the moon
Look beautiful, when all the winds are laid,
And every height comes out, and jutting peak
And valley, and the immeasurable heavens
Break open to their highest, and all the stars
Shine, and the Shepherd gladdens in his heart:
So many a fire between the ships and stream
Of Xanthus blazed before the towers of Troy,
A thousand on the plain; and close by each
Sat fifty in the blaze of burning fire;
And eating hoary grain and pulse the steeds,
Fixt by their cars, waited the golden dawn.

Iliad VIII. 542–561.

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THE WINDOW

OR, THE SONGS OF THE WRENS

WORDS WRITTEN FOR MUSIC

THE MUSIC BY ARTHUR SULLIVAN

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FOUR years ago Mr. Sullivan requested me to write a little song-cycle German fashion, for him to exercise his art upon. He had been very successful in setting such old songs as "Orpheus with his lute," and I drest up for him, partly in the old style, a puppet whose almost only merit is, perhaps, that it can dance to Mr. Sullivan's instrument. I am sorry that my four-year-old puppet should have to dance at all in the dark shadow of these days; but the music is now completed, and I am bound by my promise.

A. TENNYSON.

December, 1870.

This series of songs was first printed in 1867 at Canford Manor, at the private printing press of Sir Ivor Bertie Guest, with the following dedication: "These little songs, whose almost sole merit — at least till they are wedded to music — is that they are so excellently printed, I dedicate to the printer."

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THE WINDOW.

ON THE HILL.

THE lights and shadows fly!
Yonder it brightens and darkens down on the plain.
A jewel, a jewel dear to a lover's eye!
Oh is it the brook, or a pool, or her window-pane,
When the winds are up in the morning?

Clouds that are racing above,
And winds and lights and shadows that cannot be still,
All running on one way to the home of my love,
You are all running on, and I stand on the slope of the hill,
And the winds are up in the morning!

Follow, follow the chase!
And my thoughts are as quick and as quick, ever on, on, on.
O lights, are you flying over her sweet little face?
And my heart is there before you are come, and gone,
When the winds are up in the morning!

Follow them down the slope!
And I follow them down to the window-pane of my dear,
And it brightens and darkens and brightens like my hope,
And it darkens and brightens and darkens like my fear,
And the winds are up in the morning.

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AT THE WINDOW.

VINE, vine and eglantine,
Clasp her window, trail and twine!
Rose, rose and clematis,
Trail and twine and clasp and kiss,
Kiss, kiss; and make her a bower
All of flowers, and drop me a flower,
Drop me a flower.

Vine, vine and eglantine,
Cannot a flower, a flower, be mine?
Rose, rose and clematis,
Drop me a flower, a flower, to kiss,
Kiss, kiss — and out of her bower
All of flowers, a flower, a flower,
Dropt, a flower.

GONE!

GONE!
Gone, till the end of the year,
Gone, and the light gone with her and left me in shadow here!

Gone — flitted away,
Taken the stars from the night and the sun from the day!
Gone, and a cloud in my heart, and a storm in the air!
Flown to the east or the west, flitted I know not where!
Down in the south is a flash and a groan: she is there! she is there!

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WINTER.

THE frost is here,
And fuel is dear,
And woods are sear,
And fires burn clear,
And frost is here
And has bitten the heel of the going year.

Bite, frost, bite!
You roll up away from the light
The blue woodlouse, and the plump dormouse,
And the bees are still'd, and the flies are kill'd,
And you bite far into the heart of the house,
But not into mine.

Bite, frost, bite!
The woods are all the searer,
The fuel is all the dearer,
The fires are all the clearer,
My spring is all the nearer,
You have bitten into the heart of the earth,
But not into mine.

SPRING.

BIRDS' love and birds' song
Flying here and there,
Birds' song and birds' love,
And you with gold for hair!
Birds' song and birds' love,
Passing with the weather,
Men's song and men's love,
To love once and forever.

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Men's love and birds' love,
And women's love and men's!
And you my wren with a crown of gold,
You my Queen of the wrens!
You the Queen of the wrens—
We'll be birds of a feather,
I'll be King of the Queen of the wrens,
And all in a nest together.

THE LETTER.

WHERE is another sweet as my sweet,
Fine of the fine, and shy of the shy?
Fine little hands, fine little feet—
Dewy blue eye.
Shall I write to her? shall I go?
Ask her to marry me by and by?
Somebody said that she'd say no;
Somebody knows that she'll say ay!

Ay or no, if ask'd to her face?
Ay or no, from shy of the shy?
Go, little letter, apace, apace,
Fly!
Fly to the light in the valley below—
Tell my wish to her dewy blue eye:
Somebody said that she'd say no;
Somebody knows that she'll say ay!

NO ANSWER.

THE mist and the rain, the mist and the rain!
Is it ay or no? is it ay or no?

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And never a glimpse of her window-pane!
And I may die but the grass will grow,
And the grass will grow when I am gone,
And the wet west wind and the world will go on.

Ay is the song of the wedded spheres,
No is trouble and cloud and storm,
Ay is life for a hundred years,
No will push me down to the worm,
And when I am there and dead and gone,
The wet west wind and the world will go on.

The wind and the wet, the wind and the wet!
Wet west wind, how you blow, you blow!
And never a line from my lady yet!
Is it ay or no? is it ay or no?
Blow then, blow, and when I am gone,
The wet west wind and the world may go on.

NO ANSWER.

WINDS are loud and you are dumb:
Take my love, for love will come,
Love will come but once a life.
Winds are loud and winds will pass!
Spring is here with leaf and grass:
Take my love and be my wife.
After-loves of maids and men
Are but dainties drest again:
Love me now, you'll love me then:
Love can love but once a life.

THE ANSWER.

TWO little hands that meet,
Claspt on her seal, my sweet!

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Must I take you and break you,
Two little hands that meet?
I must take you, and break you,
And loving hands must part —
Take, take — break, break —
Break — you may break my heart.
Faint heart never won —
Break, break, and all's done.

AY!

BE merry, all birds, to-day,
Be merry on earth as you never were merry before,
Be merry in heaven, O larks, and far away,
And merry forever and ever, and one day more.
Why?
For it's easy to find a rhyme.

Look, look, how he flits,
The fire-crown'd king of the wrens, from out of the pine!
Look how they tumble the blossom, the mad little tits!
"Cuck-oo! Cuck-oo!" was ever a May so fine?
Why?
For it's easy to find a rhyme.

O merry the linnet and dove,
And swallow and sparrow and throstle, and have your desire!
O merry my heart, you have gotten the wings of love,
And flit like the king of the wrens with a crown of fire.
Why!
For it's ay ay, ay ay.

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WHEN.

SUN comes, moon comes,
Time slips away.
Sun sets, moon sets,
Love, fix a day.

"A year hence, a year hence."
"We shall both be gray."
"A month hence, a month hence."
"Far, far away."

"A week hence, a week hence."
"Ah, the long delay."
"Wait a little, wait a little,
You shall fix a day."

"To-morrow, love, to-morrow,
And that's an age away."
Blaze upon her window, sun,
And honor all the day.

MARRIAGE MORNING.

LIGHT, so low upon earth,
You send a flash to the sun.
Here is the golden close of love,
All my wooing is done.
Oh, the woods and the meadows,
Woods where we hid from the wet,
Stiles where we stay'd to be kind,
Meadows in which we met!
Light, so low in the vale,
You flash and lighten afar,

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For this is the golden morning of love,
  And you are his morning star.
Flash, I am coming, I come,
  By meadow and stile and wood,
Oh, lighten into my eyes and my heart,
  Into my heart and my blood!
Heart, are you great enough
  For a love that never tires?
O heart, are you great enough for love?
  I have heard of thorns and briers.
Over the thorns and briers,
  Over the meadows and stiles,
Over the world to the end of it
  Flash for a million miles.

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THE LOVER'S TALE

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THE original preface to "The Lover's Tale" states that it was composed in my nineteenth year. Two only of the three parts then written were printed, when, feeling the imperfection of the poem, I withdrew it from the press. One of my friends, however, who, boy-like, admired the boy's work, distributed among our common associates of that hour some copies of these two parts, without my knowledge, without the omissions and amendments which I had in contemplation, and marred by the many misprints of the compositor. Seeing that these two parts have of late been mercilessly pirated, and that what I had deemed scarce worthy to live is not allowed to die, may I not be pardoned if I suffer the whole poem at last to come into the light, accompanied with a reprint of the sequel, — a work of my mature life, — "The Golden Supper"?

May, 1879

The "Golden Supper" is founded upon a story in Boccaccio.

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THE LOVER'S TALE.

ARGUMENT.

Julian, whose cousin and foster-sister Camilla, has been wedded to his friend and rival, Lionel, endeavors to narrate the story of his own love for her, and the strange sequel. He speaks (in Parts II. and III.) of having been haunted by visions and the sound of bells, tolling for a funeral, and at last ringing for a marriage; but he breaks away, overcome, as he approaches the Event, and a witness to it completes the tale.

I.

HERE far away, seen from the topmost cliff,
Filling with purple gloom the vacancies
Between the tufted hills, the sloping seas
Hung in mid-heaven, and half way down rare sails,
White as white clouds, floated from sky to sky.
Oh! pleasant breast of waters, quiet bay,
Like to a quiet mind in the loud world,
Where the chafed breakers of the outer sea
Sank powerless, as anger falls aside
And withers on the breast of peaceful love;
Thou didst receive the growth of pines that fledged
The hills that watched thee, as Love watcheth Love,
In thine own essence, and delight thyself
To make it wholly thine on sunny days.
Keep thou thy name of "Lover's Bay." See, sirs,
Even now the Goddess of the Past, that takes
The heart, and sometimes touches but one string
That quivers, and is silent, and sometimes
Sweeps suddenly all its half-moulder'd chords
To some old melody, begins to play
That air which pleased her first. I feel thy breath;
I come, great Mistress of the ear and eye:

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Thy breath is of the pinewood; and tho' years
Have hollow'd out a deep and stormy strait
Betwixt the native land of Love and me,
Breathe but a little on me, and the sail
Will draw me to the rising of the sun,
The lucid chambers of the morning star,
And East of Life.

Permit me, friend, I prithee,
To pass my hand across my brows, and muse
On those dear hills, that never more will meet
The sight that throbs and aches beneath my touch,
As tho' there beat a heart in either eye;
For when the outer lights are darken'd thus,
The memory's vision hath a keener edge.
It grows upon me now — the semicircle
Of dark blue waters and the narrow fringe
Of curving beach — its wreaths of dripping green —
Its pale pink shells — the summer-house aloft
That open'd on the pines with doors of glass,
A mountain nest — the pleasure-boat that rock'd
Light green with its own shadow, keel to keel,
Upon the dappled dimplings of the wave,
That blanch'd upon its side.
O Love, O Hope!
They come, they crowd upon me all at once —
Moved from the cloud of unforgotten things,
That sometimes on the horizon of the mind
Lies folded, often sweeps athwart in storm —
Flash upon flash they lighten thro' me — days
Of dewy dawning and the amber eves
When thou and I, Camilla, thou and I
Were borne about the bay or safely moor'd
Beneath a low-brow'd cavern, where the tide
Plash'd, sapping its worn ribs; and all without
The slowly ridging rollers on the cliffs
Clash'd, calling to each other, and thro' the arch
Down those loud waters, like a setting star,

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Mixt with the gorgeous west the light-house shone,
And silver-smiling Venus ere she fell
Would often loiter in her balmy blue,
To crown it with herself.

Here, too, my love
Waver'd at anchor with me, when day hung
From his mid-dome in Heaven's airy halls;
Gleams of the water-circles as they broke,
Flicker'd like doubtful smiles about her lips,
Quiver'd a flying glory on her hair,
Leapt like a passing thought across her eyes;
And mine with one that will not pass, till earth
And heaven pass too, dwelt on my heaven, a face
Most starry-fair, but kindled from within
As 't were with dawn. She was dark-haired, dark-eyed:
Oh, such dark eyes! a single glance of them
Will govern a whole life from birth to death,
Careless of all things else, led on with light
In trances and in visions: look at them,
You lose yourself in utter ignorance;
You cannot find their depth; for they go back,
And farther back, and still withdraw themselves
Quite into the deep soul, that evermore
Fresh springing from her fountains in the brain,
Still pouring thro', floods with redundant life
Her narrow portals.

Trust me, long ago
I should have died, if it were possible
To die in gazing on that perfectness
Which I do bear within me: I had died,
But from my farthest lapse, my latest ebb,
Thine image, like a charm of light and strength
Upon the waters, push'd me back again
On these deserted sands of barren life.
Tho' from the deep vault where the heart of Hope
Fell into dust, and crumbled in the dark—

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Forgetting how to render beautiful
Her countenance with quick and healthful blood —
Thou didst not sway me upward; could I perish
While thou, a meteor of the sepulchre,
Didst swathe thyself all round Hope's quiet urn
Forever? He, that saith it, hath o'erstept
The slippery footing of his narrow wit,
And fall'n away from judgment. Thou art light,
To which my spirit leaneth all her flowers,
And length of days, and immortality
Of thought, and freshness ever self-renew'd.
For Time and Grief abode too long with Life,
And, like all other friends i' the world, at last
They grew aweary of her fellowship:
So Time and Grief did beckon unto Death,
And Death drew nigh and beat the doors of Life:
But thou didst sit alone in the inner house,
A wakeful portress, and didst parle with Death, —
"This is a charmèd dwelling which I hold;"
So Death gave back, and would no further come.
Yet is my life nor in the present time,
Nor in the present place. To me alone,
Push'd from his chair of regal heritage,
The Present is the vassal of the Past:
So that, in that I *have* lived, do I live,
And cannot die, and am, in having been,
A portion of the pleasant yesterday,
Thrust forward on to-day and out of place;
A body journeying onward, sick with toil,
The weight as if of age upon my limbs,
The grasp of hopeless grief about my heart,
And all the senses weaken'd, save in that,
Which long ago they had glean'd and garner'd up
Into the granaries of memory —
The clear brow, bulwark of the precious brain,
Chink'd as you see, and seam'd — and all the while
The light soul twines and mingles with the growths
Of vigorous early days, attracted, won,

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Married, made one with, molten into all
The beautiful in Past of act or place,
And like the all-enduring camel, driven
Far from the diamond fountain by the palms,
Who toils across the middle moonlit nights,
Or when the white heats of the blinding noons
Beat from the concave sand; yet in him keeps
A draught of that sweet fountain that he loves,
To stay his feet from falling, and his spirit
From bitterness of death.

Ye ask me, friends,
When I began to love. How should I tell you?
Or from the after-fulness of my heart,
Flow back again unto my slender spring
And first of love, tho' every turn and depth
Between is clearer in my life than all
Its present flow. Ye know not what ye ask.
How should the broad and open flower tell
What sort of bud it was, when, prest together
In its green sheath, close-lapt in silken folds,
It seem'd to keep its sweetness to itself,
Yet was not the less sweet for that it seem'd?
For young Life knows not when young Life was born,
But takes it all for granted: neither Love,
Warm in the heart, his cradle, can remember
Love in the womb, but resteth satisfied,
Looking on her that brought him to the light:
Or as men know not when they fall asleep
Into delicious dreams, our other life,
So know I not when I began to love.
This is my sum of knowledge — that my love
Grew with myself — say rather, was my growth,
My inward sap, the hold I have on earth,
My outward circling air wherewith I breathe,
Which yet upholds my life, and evermore
Is to me daily life and daily death:
For how should I have lived and not have loved?

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Can ye take off the sweetness from the flower,
The color and the sweetness from the rose,
And place them by themselves; or set apart
Their motions and their brightness from the stars,
And then point out the flower or the star?
Or build a wall betwixt my life and love,
And tell me where I am? 'T is even thus:
In that I live I love; because I love
I live: whate'er is fountain to the one
Is fountain to the other; and whene'er
Our God unknits the riddle of the one,
There is no shade or fold of mystery
Swathing the other.

Many, many years
(For they seem many and my most of life,
And well I could have linger'd in that porch,
So unproportion'd to the dwelling-place),
In the May dews of childhood, opposite
The flush and dawn of youth, we lived together,
Apart, alone together on those hills.

Before he saw my day my father died,
And he was happy that he saw it not;
But I and the first daisy on his grave
From the same clay came into light at once.
As Love and I do number equal years,
So she, my love, is of an age with me.
How like each other was the birth of each!
On the same morning, almost the same hour,
Under the selfsame aspect of the stars,
(O falsehood of all starcraft!) we were born.
How like each other was the birth of each!
The sister of my mother — she that bore
Camilla close beneath her beating heart,
Which to the imprison'd spirit of the child,
With its true-touchèd pulses in the flow
And hourly visitation of the blood,

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Sent notes of preparation manifold,
And mellow'd echoes of the outer world —
My mother's sister, mother of my love,
Who had a twofold claim upon my heart,
One twofold mightier than the other was,
In giving so much beauty to the world,
And so much wealth as God had charged her with —
Loathing to put it from herself forever,
Left her own life with it; and dying thus,
Crown'd with her highest act the placid face
And breathless body of her good deeds past.

So we were born, so orphan'd. She was motherless
And I without a father. So from each
Of those two pillars which from earth uphold
Our childhood, one had fallen away, and all
The careful burden of our tender years
Trembled upon the other. He that gave
Her life, to me delightedly fulfill'd
All loving-kindnesses, all offices
Of watchful care and trembling tenderness.
He waked for both: he pray'd for both: he slept
Dreaming of both: nor was his love the less
Because it was divided, and shot forth
Boughs on each side, laden with wholesome shade,
Wherein we nested sleeping or awake,
And sang aloud the matin-song of life.

She was my foster-sister: on one arm
The flaxen ringlets of our infancies
Wander'd, the while we rested: one soft lap
Pillow'd us both: a common light of eyes
Was on us as we lay: our baby lips,
Kissing one bosom, ever drew from thence
The stream of life, one stream, one life, one blood,
One sustenance, which, still as thought grew large,
Still larger moulding all the house of thought,
Made all our tastes and fancies like, perhaps —

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All — all but one; and strange to me, and sweet,
Sweet thro' strange years to know that whatsoe'er
Our general mother meant for me alone,
Our mutual mother dealt to both of us:
So what was earliest mine in earliest life,
I shared with her in whom myself remains.

As was our childhood, so our infancy,
They tell me, was a very miracle
Of fellow-feeling and communion.
They tell me that we would not be alone —
We cried when we were parted; when I wept,
Her smile lit up the rainbow on my tears,
Stayed on the cloud of sorrow; that we loved
The sound of one-another's voices more
Than the gray cuckoo loves his name, and learnt
To lisp in tune together; that we slept
In the same cradle always, face to face,
Heart beating time to heart, lip pressing lip,
Folding each other, breathing on each other,
Dreaming together (dreaming of each other
They should have added), till the morning light
Sloped thro' the pines, upon the dewy pane
Falling, unseal'd our eyelids, and we woke
To gaze upon each other. If this be true,
At thought of which my whole soul languishes
And faints, and hath no pulse, no breath — as tho'
A man in some still garden should infuse
Rich attar in the bosom of the rose,
Till, drunk with its own wine, and overfull
Of sweetness, and in smelling of itself,
It fall on its own thorns — if this be true, —
And that way my wish leads me evermore
Still to believe it, 't is so sweet a thought, —
Why in the utter stillness of the soul
Doth question'd memory answer not, nor tell
Of this our earliest, our closest-drawn,
Most loveliest, earthly-heavenliest harmony?

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O blossom'd portal of the lonely house,
Green prelude, April promise, glad new-year
Of Being, which with earliest violets
And lavish carol of clear-throated larks
Fill'd all the March of life! — I will not speak of thee;
These have not seen thee, these can never know thee,
They cannot understand me. Pass we then
A term of eighteen years. Ye would but laugh
If I should tell you how I hoard in thought
The faded rhymes and scraps of ancient crones,
Gray relics of the nurseries of the world,
Which are as gems set in my memory,
Because she learnt them with me; or what use
To know her father left us just before
The daffodil was blown? or how we found
The dead man cast upon the shore? All this
Seems to the quiet daylight of your minds
But cloud and smoke, and in the dark of mine
Is traced with flame. Move with me to the event.

There came a glorious morning, such a one
As dawns but once a season. Mercury
On such a morning would have flung himself
From cloud to cloud, and swum with balanced wings
To some tall mountain: when I said to her,
"A day for Gods to stoop," she answered, "Ay,
And men to soar:" for as that other gazed,
Shading his eyes till all the fiery cloud,
The prophet and the chariot and the steeds,
Suck'd into oneness like a little star
Were drunk into the inmost blue, we stood,
When first we came from out the pines at noon,
With hands for eaves, uplooking and almost
Waiting to see some blessed shape in heaven,
So bathed we were in brilliance. Never yet
Before or after have I known the spring
Pour with such sudden deluges of light
Into the middle summer; for that day

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Love, rising, shook his wings, and charged the winds
With spiced May-sweets from bound to bound, and blew
Fresh fire into the sun, and from within
Burst thro' the heated buds, and sent his soul
Into the songs of birds, and touch'd far-off
His mountain-altars, his high hills, with flame
Milder and purer.
Thro' the rocks we wound:
The great pine shook with lonely sounds of joy
That came on the sea-wind. As mountain streams
Our bloods ran free: the sunshine seem'd to brood
More warmly on the heart than on the brow.
We often paused, and, looking back, we saw
The clefts and openings in the mountains fill'd
With the blue valley and the glistening brooks,
And all the low dark groves, a land of love!
A land of promise, a land of memory,
A land of promise flowing with the milk
And honey of delicious memories!
And down to sea, and far as eye could ken,
Each way from verge to verge a Holy Land,
Still growing holier as you near'd the bay,
For there the Temple stood.
When we had reach'd
The grassy platform on some hill, I stoop'd,
I gather'd the wild herbs, and for her brows
And mine made garlands of the selfsame flower,
Which she took smiling, and with my work thus
Crown'd her clear forehead. Once or twice she told me
(For I remember all things) to let grow
The flowers that run poison in their veins.
She said, "The evil flourish in the world."
Then playfully she gave herself the lie—
"Nothing in nature is unbeautiful;
So, brother, pluck, and spare not." So I wove
Ev'n the dull-blooded poppy-stem, "whose flower,
Hued with the scarlet of a fierce sunrise,
Like to the wild youth of an evil prince,

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Is without sweetness, but who crowns himself
Above the secret poisons of his heart
In his old age." A graceful thought of hers
Grav'n on my fancy! And oh, how like a nymph,
A stately mountain nymph, she look'd! how native
Unto the hills she trod on! While I gazed,
My coronal slowly disentwined itself
And fell between us both; tho' while I gazed
My spirit leap'd as with those thrills of bliss
That strike across the soul in prayer, and show us
That we are surely heard. Methought a light
Burst from the garland I had wov'n, and stood
A solid glory on her bright black hair;
A light methought broke from her dark, dark eyes,
And shot itself into the singing winds;
A mystic light flash'd ev'n from her white robe
As from a glass in the sun, and fell about
My footsteps on the mountains.
Last we came
To what our people call "The Hill of Woe."
A bridge is there, that, look'd at from beneath,
Seems but a cobweb filament to link
The yawning of an earthquake-cloven chasm,
And thence one night, when all the winds were loud,
A woful man (for so the story went)
Had thrust his wife and child and dash'd himself
Into the dizzy depth below. Below,
Fierce in the strength of far descent, a stream
Flies with a shatter'd foam along the chasm.

The path was perilous, loosely strewn with crags:
We mounted slowly; yet to both there came
The joy of life in steepness overcome,
And victories of ascent, and looking down
On all that had look'd down on us; and joy
In breathing nearer heaven; and joy to me,
High over all the azure-circled earth,
To breathe with her as if in heaven itself;

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And more than joy that I to her became
Her guardian and her angel, raising her
Still higher, past all peril, until she saw
Beneath her feet the region far away,
Beyond the nearest mountain's bosky brows,
Arise in open prospect — heath and hill,
And hollow lined and wooded to the lips,
And steep-down walls of battlemented rock
Gilded with broom, or shatter'd into spires,
And glory of broad waters interfused,
Whence rose as it were breath and steam of gold,
And over all the great wood rioting
And climbing, streak'd or starr'd at intervals
With falling brook or blossom'd bush — and last,
Framing the mighty landscape to the west,
A purple range of mountain-cones, between
Whose interspaces gush'd in blinding bursts
The incorporate blaze of sun and sea.
At length
Descending from the point and standing both,
There on the tremulous bridge, that from beneath
Had seem'd a gossamer filament up in air,
We paused amid the splendor. All the west
And ev'n unto the middle south was ribb'd
And barr'd with bloom on bloom. The sun below,
Held for a space 'twixt cloud and wave, shower'd down
Rays of a mighty circle, weaving over
That various wilderness a tissue of light
Unparallel'd. On the other side, the moon,
Half melted into thin blue air, stood still,
And pale and fibrous as a wither'd leaf,
Nor yet endured in presence of His eyes
To indue his lustre; most-unlover-like,
Since in his absence full of light and joy,
And giving light to others. But this most,
Next to her presence whom I loved so well,
Spoke loudly even into my inmost heart
As to my outward hearing: the loud stream,

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Forth issuing from his portals in the crag
(A visible link unto the home of my heart),
Ran amber toward the west, and nigh the sea
Parting my own loved mountains was received,
Shorn of its strength, into the sympathy
Of that small bay, which out to open main
Glow'd intermingling close beneath the sun.
Spirit of Love! that little hour was bound
Shut in from Time, and dedicate to thee:
Thy fires from heaven had touch'd it, and the earth
They fell on became hallow'd evermore.

We turn'd: our eyes met: hers were bright, and mine
Were dim with floating tears, that shot the sunset
In lightnings round me; and my name was borne
Upon her breath. Henceforth my name has been
A hallow'd memory like the names of old,
A centred, glory-circled memory,
And a peculiar treasure, brooking not
Exchange or currency; and in that hour
A hope flow'd round me, like a golden mist
Charm'd amid eddies of melodious airs,
A moment, ere the onward whirlwind shatter it,
Waver'd and floated — which was less than Hope,
Because it lack'd the power of perfect Hope;
But which was more and higher than all Hope,
Because all other Hope had lower aim;
Even that this name to which her gracious lips
Did lend such gentle utterance, this one name,
In some obscure hereafter, might inwreathe
(How lovelier, nobler then!) her life, her love,
With my life, love, soul, spirit, and heart and strength.

"Brother," she said, "let this be call'd henceforth
The Hill of Hope;" and I replied, "O sister,
My will is one with thine; the Hill of Hope."
Nevertheless, we did not change the name.

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I did not speak; I could not speak my love.
Love lieth deep: Love dwells not in lip-depths.
Love wraps his wings on either side the heart,
Constraining it with kisses close and warm,
Absorbing all the incense of sweet thoughts
So that they pass not to the shrine of sound.
Else had the life of that delighted hour
Drunk in the largeness of the utterance
Of Love; but how should Earthly measure mete
The Heavenly-unmeasured or unlimited Love,
Who scarce can tune his high majestic sense
Unto the thunder-song that wheels the spheres,
Scarce living in the Æolian harmony,
And flowing odor of the spacious air,
Scarce housed within the circle of this Earth,
Be cabin'd up in words and syllables,
Which pass with that which breathes them? Sooner Earth
Might go round Heaven, and the strait girth of Time
Inswathe the fulness of Eternity,
Than language grasp the infinite of Love.

O day which did enwomb that happy hour,
Thou art blessed in the years, divinest day!
O Genius of that hour which dost uphold
Thy coronal of glory like a God,
Amid thy melancholy mates far-seen,
Who walk before thee, ever turning round
To gaze upon thee till their eyes are dim
With dwelling on the light and depth of thine,
Thy name is ever worshipp'd among hours!
Had I died then, I had not seem'd to die,
For bliss stood round me like the light of Heaven,—
Had I died then, I had not known the death;
Yea had the Power from whose right hand the light
Of Life issueth, and from whose left hand floweth
The Shadow of Death, perennial effluences,
Whereof to all that draw the wholesome air
Somewhile the one must overflow the other;

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Then had he stemm'd my day with night, and driven
My current to the fountain whence it sprang, —
Even his own abiding excellence —
On me, methinks, that shock of gloom had fall'n
Unfelt, and in this glory I had merged
The other, like the sun I gazed upon,
Which seeming for the moment due to death,
And dipping his head low beneath the verge,
Yet bearing round about him his own day,
In confidence of unabated strength,
Steppeth from Heaven to Heaven, from light to light,
And holdeth his undimmed forehead far
Into a clearer zenith, pure of cloud.

We trod the shadow of the downward hill;
We past from light to dark. On the other side
Is scoop'd a cavern and a mountain hall,
Which none have fathom'd. If you go far in
(The country people rumor) you may hear
The moaning of the woman and the child,
Shut in the secret chambers of the rock.
I too have heard a sound — perchance of streams
Running far on within its inmost halls,
The home of darkness; but the cavern mouth,
Half overtrailed with a wanton weed,
Gives birth to a brawling brook, that passing lightly
Adown a natural stair of tangled roots,
Is presently received in a sweet grave
Of eglantines, a place of burial
Far lovelier than its cradle; for unseen,
But taken with the sweetness of the place,
It makes a constant bubbling melody
That drowns the nearer echoes. Lower down
Spreads out a little lake, that, flooding, leaves
Low banks of yellow sand; and from the woods
That belt it rise three dark, tall cypresses, —
Three cypresses, symbols of mortal woe,
That men plant over graves.

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Hither we came,
And sitting down upon the golden moss,
Held converse sweet and low — low converse sweet,
In which our voices bore least part. The wind
Told a love tale beside us, how he woo'd
The waters, and the waters answering lisp'd
To kisses of the wind, that, sick with love,
Fainted at intervals, and grew again
To utterance of passion. Ye cannot shape
Fancy so fair as is this memory.
Methought all excellence that ever was
Had drawn herself from many thousand years,
And all the separate Edens of this earth,
To centre in this place and time. I listen'd,
And her words stole with most prevailing sweetness
Into my heart, as thronging fancies come
To boys and girls when summer days are new,
And soul and heart and body are all at ease:
What marvel my Camilla told me all?
It was so happy an hour, so sweet a place,
And I was as the brother of her blood,
And by that name I moved upon her breath;
Dear name, which had too much of nearness in it
And heralded the distance of this time!
At first her voice was very sweet and low,
As if she were afraid of utterance;
But in the onward current of her speech
(As echoes of the hollow-banked brooks
Are fashion'd by the channel which they keep),
Her words did of their meaning borrow sound,
Her cheek did catch the color of her words.
I heard and trembled, yet I could but hear;
My heart paused — my raised eyelids would not fall,
But still I kept my eyes upon the sky.
I seem'd the only part of Time stood still,
And saw the motion of all other things;
While her words, syllable by syllable,
Like water, drop by drop, upon my ear

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Fell; and I wish'd, yet wish'd her not to speak;
But she spake on, for I did name no wish.
What marvel my Camilla told me all
Her maiden dignities of Hope and Love —
"Perchance," she said, "return'd." Even then the stars
Did tremble in their stations as I gazed;
But she spake on, for I did name no wish,
No wish — no hope. Hope was not wholly dead,
But breathing hard at the approach of Death, —
Camilla, my Camilla, who was mine
No longer in the dearest sense of mine —
For all the secret of her inmost heart,
And all the maiden empire of her mind,
Lay like a map before me, and I saw
There, where I hoped myself to reign as king,
There, where that day I crown'd myself as king,
There in my realm, and even on my throne,
Another! Then it seem'd as tho' a link
Of some tight chain within my inmost frame
Was riven in twain: that life I heeded not
Flow'd from me, and the darkness of the grave,
The darkness of the grave and utter night,
Did swallow up my vision; at her feet,
Even the feet of her I loved, I fell,
Smit with exceeding sorrow unto Death.

Then had the earth beneath me yawning cloven
With such a sound as when an iceberg splits
From cope to base — had Heaven from all her doors,
With all her golden thresholds clashing, roll'd
Her heaviest thunder — I had lain as dead,
Mute, blind and motionless as then I lay;
Dead, for henceforth there was no life for me!
Mute, for henceforth what use were words to me!
Blind, for the day was as the night to me!
The night to me was kinder than the day;
The night in pity took away my day,
Because my grief as yet was newly born

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Of eyes too weak to look upon the light;
And thro' the hasty notice of the ear
Frail Life was startled from the tender love
Of him she brooded over. Would I had lain
Until the plaited ivy-tress had wound
Round my worn limbs, and the wild brier had driven
Its knotted thorns thro' my unpaining brows,
Leaning its roses on my faded eyes.
The wind had blown above me, and the rain
Had fall'n upon me, and the gilded snake
Had nestled in this bosom-throne of Love,
But I had been at rest for evermore.

Long time entrancement held me. All too soon
Life (like a wanton too-officious friend,
Who will not *hear* denial, vain and rude
With proffer of unwished-for services)
Entering all the avenues of sense
Passed thro' into his citadel, the brain,
With hated warmth of apprehensiveness.
And first the chillness of the sprinkled brook
Smote on my brows, and then I seem'd to hear
Its murmur, as the drowning seaman hears,
Who with his head below the surface dropt
Listens the muffled booming indistinct
Of the confused floods, and dimly knows
His head shall rise no more: and then came in
The white light of the weary moon above,
Diffused and molten into flaky cloud.
Was my sight drunk that it did shape to me
Him who should own that name? Were it not well
If so be that the echo of that name
Ringing within the fancy had updrawn
A fashion and a phantasm of the form
It should attach to? Phantom! — had the ghastliest
That ever lusted for a body, sucking
The foul steam of the grave to thicken by it,
There in the shuddering moonlight brought its face

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And what it has for eyes as close to mine
As he did — better that than his, than he
The friend, the neighbor, Lionel, the beloved,
The loved, the lover, the happy Lionel,
The low-voiced, tender-spirited Lionel,
All joy, to whom my agony was a joy.
Oh how her choice did leap forth from his eyes!
Oh how her love did clothe itself in smiles
About his lips! and — not one moment's grace —
Then when the effect weigh'd seas upon my head
To come my way! to twit me with the cause!

Was not the land as free thro' all her ways
To him as me? Was not his wont to walk
Between the going light and growing night?
Had I not learnt my loss before he came?
Could that be more because he came my way?
Why should he not come my way if he would?
And yet to-night, to-night — when all my wealth
Flash'd from me in a moment and I fell
Beggar'd forever — why *should* he come my way
Robed in those robes of light I must not wear,
With that great crown of beams about his brows —
Come like an angel to a damned soul,
To tell him of the bliss he had with God —
Come like a careless and a greedy heir
That scarce can wait the reading of the will
Before he takes possession? Was mine a mood
To be invaded rudely, and not rather
A sacred, secret, unapproached woe,
Unspeakable? I was shut up with Grief;
She took the body of my past delight,
Narded and swathed and balm'd it for herself,
And laid it in a sepulchre of rock
Never to rise again. I was led mute
Into her temple like a sacrifice;
I was the High Priest in her holiest place,
Not to be loudly broken in upon.

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O friend, thoughts deep and heavy as these well nigh
O'erbore the limits of my brain; but he
Bent o'er me, and my neck his arm upstay'd.
I thought it was an adder's fold, and once
I strove to disengage myself, but fail'd,
Being so feeble: she bent above me, too;
Wan was her cheek; for whatsoe'er of blight
Lives in the dewy touch of pity had made
The red rose there a pale one — and her eyes —
I saw the moonlight glitter on their tears —
And some few drops of that distressful rain
Fell on my face, and her long ringlets moved,
Drooping and beaten by the breeze, and brush'd
My fallen forehead in their to and fro,
For in the sudden anguish of her heart
Loosed from their simple thrall they had flow'd abroad,
And floated on and parted round her neck,
Mantling her form half way. She, when I woke,
Something she ask'd, I know not what, and ask'd,
Unanswer'd, since I spake not; for the sound
Of that dear voice so musically low,
And now first heard with any sense of pain,
As it had taken life away before,
Choked all the syllables, that strove to rise
From my full heart.
The blissful lover, too,
From his great hoard of happiness distill'd
Some drops of solace; like a vain rich man,
That, having always prosper'd in the world,
Folding his hands, deals comfortable words
To hearts wounded forever; yet, in truth,
Fair speech was his and delicate of phrase,
Falling in whispers on the sense, address'd
More to the inward than the outward ear,
As rain of the midsummer midnight soft,
Scarce heard, recalling fragrance and the green
Of the dead spring: but mine was wholly dead,
No bud, no leaf, no flower, no fruit for me.

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Yet who had done, or who had suffer'd wrong?
And why was I to darken their pure love,
If, as I found, they two did love each other,
Because my own was darken'd? Why was I
To cross between their happy star and them?
To stand a shadow by their shining doors,
And vex them with my darkness? Did I love her?
Ye know that I did love her; to this present
My full-orb'd love has waned not. Did I love her,
And could I look upon her tearful eyes?
What had *she* done to weep? Why should *she* weep?
O innocent of spirit — let my heart
Break rather — whom the gentlest airs of Heaven
Should kiss with an unwonted gentleness.
Her love did murder mine? What then? She deem'd
I wore a brother's mind; she call'd me brother:
She told me all her love: she shall not weep.

The brightness of a burning thought, awhile
In battle with the glooms of my dark will,
Moon-like emerged, and to itself lit up
There on the depth of an unfathom'd woe
Reflex of action. Starting up at once,
As from a dismal dream of my own death,
I, for I loved her, lost my love in Love;
I, for I loved her, grasp the hand she lov'd,
And laid it in her own, and sent my cry
Thro' the blank night to Him who loving made
The happy and the unhappy love, that He
Would hold the hand of blessing over them,
Lionel, the happy, and her, and her, his bride!
Let them so love that men and boys may say,
"Lo! how they love each other!" till their love
Shall ripen to a proverb, unto all
Known, when their faces are forgot in the land —
One golden dream of love, from which may death
Awake them with heaven's music in a life
More living to some happier happiness,

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Swallowing its precedent in victory.
And as for me, Camilla, as for me,—
The dew of tears is an unwholesome dew,
They will but sicken the sick plant the more.
Deem that I love thee but as brothers do,
So shalt thou love me still as sisters do;
Or if thou dream aught farther, dream but how
I could have loved thee, had there been none else
To love as lovers, loved again by thee.

Or this, or somewhat like to this, I spake,
When I beheld her weep so ruefully;
For sure my love should ne'er indue the front
And mask of Hate, who lives on others' moans.
Shall Love pledge Hatred in her bitter draughts,
And batten on her poisons? Love forbid!
Love passeth not the threshold of cold Hate,
And Hate is strange beneath the roof of Love.
O Love, if thou be'st Love, dry up these tears
Shed for the love of Love; for tho' mine image,
The subject of thy power, be cold in her,
Yet, like cold snow, it melteth in the source
Of these sad tears, and feeds their downward flow.
So Love, arraign'd to judgment and to death,
Received unto himself a part of blame,
Being guiltless, as an innocent prisoner,
Who, when the woful sentence hath been past,
And all the clearness of his fame hath gone
Beneath the shadow of the curse of man,
First falls asleep in swoon, wherefrom awaked,
And looking round upon his tearful friends,
Forthwith and in his agony conceives
A shameful sense as of a cleaving crime—
For whence without some guilt should such grief be?

So died that hour, and fell into the abysm
Of forms outworn, but not to me outworn,
Who never hail'd another — was there one?

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There might be one — one other, worth the life
That made it sensible. So that hour died
Like odor rapt into the winged wind
Borne into alien lands and far away.

There be some hearts so airily built, that they,
They — when their love is wreck'd — if Love can wreck —
On that sharp ridge of utmost doom ride highly
Above the perilous seas of Change and Chance;
Nay, more, hold out the lights of cheerfulness;
As the tall ship, that many a dreary year
Knit to some dismal sand-bank far at sea,
All thro' the livelong hours of utter dark,
Showers slanting light upon the dolorous wave.
For me — what light, what gleam on those black ways
Where Love could walk with banish'd Hope no more?

It was ill done to part you, Sisters fair;
Love's arms were wreath'd about the neck of Hope,
And Hope kiss'd Love, and Love drew in her breath
In that close kiss, and drank her whisper'd tales.
They said that Love would die when Hope was gone,
And Love mourn'd long, and sorrow'd after Hope;
At last she sought out Memory, and they trod
The same old paths where Love had walk'd with Hope
And Memory fed the soul of Love with tears.

II.

From that time forth I would not see her more;
But many weary moons I lived alone —
Alone, and in the heart of the great forest.
Sometimes upon the hills beside the sea
All day I watch'd the floating isles of shade,
And sometimes on the shore, upon the sands
Insensibly I drew her name, until
The meaning of the letters shot into
My brain; anon the wanton billow wash'd
Them over, till they faded like my love.

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The hollow caverns heard me — the black brooks,
Of the mid-forest heard me — the soft winds,
Laden with thistle down and seeds of flowers,
Paused in their course to hear me, for my voice
Was all of thee: the merry linnet knew me,
The squirrel knew me, and the dragon-fly
Shot by me like a flash of purple fire.
The rough brier tore my bleeding palms; the hemlock,
Brow-high, did strike my forehead as I past;
Yet trod I not the wild flower in my path,
Nor bruised the wild bird's egg.
Was this the end?
Why grew we then together in one plot?
Why fed we from one fountain? drew one sun?
Why were our mothers branches of one stem?
Why were we one in all things, save in that
Where to have been one had been the cope and crown
Of all I hoped and fear'd? — if that same nearness
Were father to this distance, and that *one*
Vauntcourier to this *double*? if Affection
Living slew Love, and Sympathy hew'd out
The bosom-sepulchre of Sympathy?

Chiefly I sought the cavern and the hill
Where last we roam'd together, for the sound
Of the loud stream was pleasant, and the wind
Came wooingly with woodbine smells. Sometimes
All day I sat within the cavern-mouth,
Fixing my eyes on those three cypress-cones
That spired above the wood; and with mad hand
Tearing the bright leaves of the ivy-screen,
I cast them in the noisy brook beneath,
And watch'd them till they vanish'd from my sight
Beneath the bower of wreathed eglantines:
And all the fragments of the living rock
(Huge blocks, which some old trembling of the world
Had loosen'd from the mountain, till they fell
Half digging their own graves) these in my agony

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Did I make bare of all the golden moss,
Wherewith the dashing runnel in the spring
Had liveried them all over. In my brain
The spirit seem'd to flag from thought to thought,
As moonlight wandering thro' a mist: my blood
Crept like marsh drains thro' all my languid limbs;
The motions of my heart seem'd far within me,
Unfrequent, low, as tho' it told its pulses;
And yet it shook me, that my frame would shudder,
As if 't were drawn asunder by the rack.
But over the deep graves of Hope and Fear,
And all the broken palaces of the Past,
Brooded one master-passion evermore,
Like to a low-hung and a fiery sky
Above some fair metropolis, earth-shock'd, —
Hung round with ragged rims and burning folds, —
Embathing all with wild and woful hues,
Great hills of ruins, and collapsèd masses
Of thunder-shaken columns indistinct,
And fused together in the tyrannous light —
Ruins, the ruin of all my life and me!

Sometimes I thought Camilla was no more,
Some one had told me she was dead, and ask'd me
If I would see her burial; then I seem'd
To rise, and through the forest-shadow borne
With more than mortal swiftness, I ran down
The steepy sea-bank, till I came upon
The rear of a procession, curving round
The silver-sheeted bay: in front of which
Six stately virgins, all in white, upbare
A broad earth-sweeping pall of whitest lawn,
Wreathed round the bier with garlands: in the distance,
From out the yellow woods upon the hill
Look'd forth the summit and the pinnacles
Of a gray steeple — thence at intervals
A low bell tolling. All the pageantry,
Save those six virgins which upheld the bier,

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Were stoled from head to foot in flowing black;
One walk'd abreast with me, and veil'd his brow,
And he was loud in weeping and in praise
Of her he follow'd: a strong sympathy
Shook all my soul: I flung myself upon him
In tears and cries: I told him all my love,
How I had loved her from the first; whereat
He shrank and howl'd, and from his brow drew back
His hand to push me from him; and the face,
The very face and form of Lionel
Flash'd thro' my eyes into my innermost brain,
And at his feet I seemed to faint and fall,
To fall and die away. I could not rise
Albeit I strove to follow. They past on,
The lordly Phantasms! in their floating folds
They past and were no more: but I had fallen
Prone by the dashing runnel on the grass.

Alway the inaudible invisible thought
Artificer and subject, lord and slave,
Shaped by the audible and visible,
Moulded the audible and visible;
All crisped sounds of wave and leaf and wind
Flatter'd the fancy of my fading brain;
The cloud-pavilion'd element, the wood,
The mountain, the three cypresses, the cave,
Storm, sunset, glows and glories of the moon
Below black firs, when silent-creeping winds
Laid the long night in silver streaks and bars,
Were wrought into the tissue of my dream:
The moanings in the forest, the loud brook,
Cries of the partridge like a rusty key
Turn'd in a lock, owl-whoop and dorhawk-whirr
Awoke me not, but were a part of sleep,
And voices in the distance calling to me
And in my vision bidding me dream on,
Like sounds without the twilight realm of dreams,
Which wander round the bases of the hills,

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And murmur at the low-dropt eaves of sleep,
Half-entering the portals. Oftentimes
The vision had fair prelude, in the end
Opening on darkness, stately vestibules
To caves and shows of Death: whether the mind,
With some revenge, — even to itself unknown, —
Made strange division of its suffering
With her, whom to have suffering view'd had been
Extremest pain; or that the clear-eyed Spirit,
Being blunted in the Present, grew at length
Prophetical and prescient of whate'er
The Future had in store: or that which most
Enchains belief, the sorrow of my spirit
Was of so wide a compass it took in
All I had loved, and my dull agony,
Ideally to her transferr'd, became
Anguish intolerable.
The day waned;
Alone I sat with her: about my brow
Her warm breath floated in the utterance
Of silver-chorded tones: her lips were sunder'd
With smiles of tranquil bliss, which broke in light
Like morning from her eyes — her eloquent eyes
(As I have seen them many a hundred times),
Filled all with pure clear fire, thro' mine down rain'd
Their spirit-searching splendors. As a vision
Unto a haggard prisoner, iron-stay'd
In damp and dismal dungeons underground,
Confined on points of faith, when strength is shock'd
With torment, and expectancy of worse
Upon the morrow, thro' the ragged walls,
All unawares before his half-shut eyes,
Comes in upon him in the dead of night,
And with the excess of sweetness and of awe,
Makes the heart tremble, and the sight run over
Upon his steely gyves; so those fair eyes
Shone on my darkness, forms which ever stood
Within the magic cirque of memory,

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Invisible but deathless, waiting still
The edict of the will to re-assume
The semblance of those rare realities
Of which they were the mirrors. Now the light
Which was their life burst through the cloud of though
Keen, irrepressible.
It was a room
Within the summer-house of which I spake,
Hung round with paintings of the sea, and one
A vessel in mid-ocean, her heaved prow
Clambering, the mast bent and the ravin wind
In her sail roaring. From the outer day,
Betwixt the close-set ivies came a broad
And solid beam of isolated light,
Crowded with driving atomies, and fell
Slanting upon that picture, from prime youth
Well known, well loved. She drew it long ago
Forth-gazing on the waste and open sea,
One morning when the upblown billow ran
Shoreward beneath red clouds, and I had pour'd
Into the shadowing pencil's naked forms
Color and life: it was a bond and seal
Of friendship, spoken of with tearful smiles;
A monument of childhood and of love;
The poesy of childhood; my lost love
Symbol'd in storm. We gazed on it together
In mute and glad remembrance, and each heart
Grew closer to the other, and the eye
Was riveted and charm-bound, gazing like
The Indian on a still-eyed snake, low-couch'd —
A beauty which is death; when all at once
That painted vessel, as with inner life,
Began to heave upon that painted sea;
An earthquake, my loud heart-beats, made the ground
Reel under us, and all at once, soul, life
And breath and motion, past and flow'd away
To those unreal billows: round and round
A whirlwind caught and bore us; mighty gyres

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Rapid and vast, of hissing spray wind-driven
Far thro' the dizzy dark. Aloud she shriek'd;
My heart was cloven with pain; I wound my arms
About her: we whirl'd giddily; the wind
Sung; but I claspt her without fear: her weight
Shrank in my grasp, and over my dim eyes,
And parted lips which drank her breath, down hung
The jaws of Death: I, groaning, from me flung
Her empty phantom: all the sway and whirl
Of the storm dropt to windless calm, and I
Down welter'd thro' the dark ever and ever.

III.

I came one day and sat among the stones
Strewn in the entry of the moaning cave;
A morning air, sweet after rain, ran over
The rippling levels of the lake, and blew
Coolness and moisture and all smells of bud
And foliage from the dark and dripping woods
Upon my fever'd brows that shook and throbb'd
From temple unto temple. To what height
The day had grown I know not. Then came on me
The hollow tolling of the bell, and all
The vision of the bier. As heretofore
I walk'd behind with one who veil'd his brow
Methought by slow degrees the sullen bell
Toll'd quicker, and the breakers on the shore
Sloped into louder surf: those that went with me,
And those that held the bier before my face,
Moved with one spirit round about the bay,
Trod swifter steps; and while I walk'd with these
In marvel at that gradual change, I thought
Four bells instead of one began to ring,
Four merry bells, four merry marriage bells,
In clanging cadence jangling peal on peal —
A long loud clash of rapid marriage-bells.
Then those who led the van, and those in rear,

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Rush'd into dance, and like wild Bacchanals
Fled onward to the steeple in the woods:
I, too, was borne along and felt the blast
Beat on my heated eyelids: all at once
The front rank made a sudden halt; the bells
Lapsed into frightful stillness; the surge fell
From thunder into whispers; those six maids
With shrieks and ringing laughter on the sand
Threw down the bier; the woods upon the hill
Waved with a sudden gust that sweeping down
Took the edges of the pall, and blew it far
Until it hung, a little silver cloud,
Over the sounding seas: I turn'd: my heart
Shrank in me, like a snow-flake in the hand,
Waiting to see the settled countenance
Of her I lov'd, adorn'd with fading flowers.
But she from out her death-like chrysalis,
She from her bier, as into fresher life,
My sister, and my cousin, and my love,
Leapt lightly clad in bridal white — her hair
Studded with one rich Provence rose — a light
Of smiling welcome round her lips — her eyes
And cheeks as bright as when she climb'd the hill.
One hand she reach'd to those that came behind,
And while I mused nor yet endured to take
So rich a prize, the man who stood with me
Stept gayly forward, throwing down his robes,
And claspt her hand in his: again the bells
Jangled and clang'd: again the stormy surf
Crash'd in the shingle: and the whirling rout
Led by those two rush'd into dance, and fled
Wind-footed to the steeple in the woods,
Till they were swallow'd in the leafy bowers,
And I stood sole beside the vacant bier.

There, there, my latest vision — then the event!

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IV.

THE GOLDEN SUPPER.

(*Another speaks.*)

HE flies the event: he leaves the event to me:
Poor Julian—how he rush'd away; the bells,
Those marriage-bells, echoing in ear and heart—
But cast a parting glance at me, you saw,
As who should say "Continue." Well, he had
One golden hour—of triumph shall I say?
Solace at least—before he left his home.

Would you had seen him in that hour of his!
He moved thro' all of it majestically—
Restrain'd himself quite to the close—but now—

Whether they *were* his lady's marriage-bells,
Or prophets of them in his fantasy,
I never ask'd: but Lionel and the girl
Were wedded, and our Julian came again
Back to his mother's house among the pines.
But these, their gloom, the mountains and the Bay,
The whole land weigh'd him down as Ætna does
The Giant of Mythology: he would go,
Would leave the land for ever, and had gone
Surely, but for a whisper "Go not yet,"
Some warning—sent divinely—as it seem'd
By that which follow'd—but of this I deem
As of the visions that he told—the event
Glanced back upon them in his after life,
And partly made them—tho' he knew it not.

And thus he stay'd and would not look at her—
No not for months: but, when the eleventh moon
After their marriage lit the lover's Bay,
Heard yet once more the tolling bell, and said,
Would you could toll me out of life, but found—
All softly as his mother broke it to him—

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A crueller reason than a crazy ear,
For that low knell tolling his lady dead—
Dead—and had lain three days without a pulse:
All that look'd on her had pronounced her dead.
And so they bore her (for in Julian's land
They never nail a dumb head up in elm),
Bore her free-faced to the free airs of heaven,
And laid her in the vault of her own kin.

What did he then? not die: he is here and hale—
Not plunge headforemost from the mountain there,
And leave the name of Lover's Leap: not he:
He knew the meaning of the whisper now,
Thought that he knew it. "This, I stay'd for this;
O love, I have not seen you for so long.
Now, now, will I go down into the grave,
I will be all alone with all I love,
And kiss her on the lips. She is his no more:
The dead returns to me, and I go down
To kiss the dead."

The fancy stirr'd him so
He rose and went, and entering the dim vault,
And, making there a sudden light, beheld
All round about him that which all will be.
The light was but a flash, and went again.
Then at the far end of the vault he saw
His lady with the moonlight on her face;
Her breast as in a shadow-prison, bars
Of black and bands of silver, which the moon
Struck from an open grating overhead
High in the wall, and all the rest of her
Drown'd in the gloom and horror of the vault.

"It was my wish," he said, "to pass, to sleep,
To rest, to be with her—till the great day
Peal'd on us with that music which rights all,
And raised us hand in hand." And kneeling there
Down in the dreadful dust that once was man,
Dust, as he said, that once was loving hearts,

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Hearts that had beat with such a love as mine—
Not such as mine, no, nor for such as her—
He softly put his arm about her neck
And kiss'd her more than once, till helpless death
And silence made him bold—nay, but I wrong him,
He reverenced his dear lady even in death;
But, placing his true hand upon her heart,
"O, you warm heart," he moan'd, "not even death
Can chill you all at once:" then starting, thought
His dreams had come again. "Do I wake or sleep?
Or am I made immortal, or my love
Mortal once more?" It beat—the heart—it beat:
Faint—but it beat: at which his own began
To pulse with such a vehemence that it drown'd
The feebler motion underneath his hand.
But when at last his doubts were satisfied,
He raised her softly from the sepulchre,
And, wrapping her all over with the cloak
He came in, and now striding fast, and now
Sitting awhile to rest, but evermore
Holding his golden burthen in his arms,
So bore her thro' the solitary land
Back to the mother's house where she was born.

There the good mother's kindly ministering,
With half a night's appliances, recall'd
Her fluttering life: she rais'd an eye that ask'd
"Where?" till the things familiar to her youth
Had made a silent answer: then she spoke
"Here! and how came I here?" and learning it
(They told her somewhat rashly as I think)
At once began to wonder and to wail,
"Ay, but you know that you must give me back:
Send! bid him come;" but Lionel was away—
Stung by his loss had vanish'd, none knew where.
"He casts me out," she wept, "and goes"—a wail
That seeming something, yet was nothing, born
Not from believing mind, but shatter'd nerve,
Yet haunting Julian, as her own reproof
At some precipitance in her burial.

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Then, when her own true spirit had return'd,
"O yes, and you," she said, "and none but you?
For you have given me life and love again,
And none but you yourself shall tell him of it,
And you shall give me back when he returns."
"Stay then a little," answer'd Julian, "here,
And keep yourself, none knowing, to yourself;
And I will do your will. I may not stay,
No, not an hour; but send me notice of him
When he returns, and then will I return,
And I will make a solemn offering of you
To him you love." And faintly she replied,
"And I will do *your* will, and none shall know."

Not know? with such a secret to be known.
But all their house was old and loved them both,
And all the house had known the loves of both;
Had died almost to serve them any way,
And all the land was waste and solitary:
And then he rode away; but after this,
An hour or two, Camilla's travail came
Upon her, and that day a boy was born,
Heir of his face and land, to Lionel.

And thus our lonely lover rode away,
And pausing at a hostel in a marsh,
There fever seized upon him: myself was then
Travelling that land, and meant to rest an hour;
And sitting down to such a base repast,
It makes me angry yet to speak of it—
I heard a groaning overhead, and climb'd
The moulder'd stairs (for everything was vile)
And in a loft, with none to wait on him,
Found, as it seem'd, a skeleton alone,
Raving of dead men's dust and beating hearts.

A dismal hostel in a dismal land,
A flat malarian world of reed and rush!
But there from fever and my care of him
Sprang up a friendship that may help us yet.

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For while we roam'd along the dreary coast,
And waited for her message, piece by piece
I learnt the drearier story of his life;
And, tho' he loved and honor'd Lionel,
Found that the sudden wail his lady made
Dwelt in his fancy: did he know her worth,
Her beauty even? should he not be taught,
Ev'n by the price that others set upon it,
The value of that jewel he had to guard?

Suddenly came her notice and we past,
I with our lover to his native Bay.

This love is of the brain, the mind, the soul:
That makes the sequel pure; tho' some of us
Beginning at the sequel know no more.
Not such am I: and yet I say, the bird
That will not hear my call, however sweet,
But if my neighbor whistle answers him—
What matter? there are others in the wood.
Yet when I saw her (and I thought him crazed,
Tho' not with such a craziness as needs
A cell and keeper), those dark eyes of hers—
Oh! such dark eyes! and not her eyes alone,
But all from these to where she touch'd on earth,
For such a craziness as Julian's look'd
No less than one divine apology.

So sweetly and so modestly she came
To greet us, her young hero in her arms!
"Kiss him," she said. "You gave me life again.
He, but for you, had never seen it once.
His other father you! Kiss him, and then
Forgive him, if his name be Julian too."

Talk of lost hopes and broken heart! his own
Sent such a flame into his face, I knew
Some sudden vivid pleasure hit him there.

But he was all the more resolved to go,

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And sent at once to Lionel, praying him
By that great love they both had borne the dead,
To come and revel for one hour with him
Before he left the land for evermore;
And then to friends—they were not many—who lived
Scatteringly about that lonely land of his,
And bade them to a banquet of farewells.

And Julian made a solemn feast: I never
Sat at a costlier; for all round his hall
From column on to column, as in a wood,
Not such as here—an equatorial one,
Great garlands swung and blossom'd; and beneath,
Heirlooms, and ancient miracles of Art,
Chalice and salver, wines that, Heaven knows when,
Had suck'd the fire of some forgotten sun,
And kept it thro' a hundred years of gloom,
Yet glowing in a heart of ruby—cups
Where nymph and god ran ever round in gold—
Others of glass as costly—some with gems—
Moveable and resettable at will,
And trebling all the rest in value—Ah heavens!
Why need I tell you all?—suffice to say
That whatsoever such a house as his,
And his was old, has in it rare or fair
Was brought before the guests: and they, the guests,
Wonder'd at some strange light in Julian's eyes
(I told you that he had his golden hour),
And such a feast, ill-suited as it seem'd
To such a time, to Lionel's loss and his,
And that resolved self-exile from a land
He never would revisit, such a feast
So rich, so strange, and stranger ev'n than rich,
But rich as for the nuptials of a king.

And stranger yet, at one end of the hall
Two great funereal curtains, looping down,
Parted a little ere they met the floor,
About a picture of his lady, taken
Some years before, and falling hid the frame.

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And just above the parting was a lamp:
So the sweet figure folded round with night
Seem'd stepping out of darkness with a smile.

Well then—our solemn feast—we ate and drank,
And might—the wines being of such nobleness—
Have jested also, but for Julian's eyes,
And something weird and wild about it all:
What was it? for our lover seldom spoke,
Scarce touch'd the meats; but ever and anon
A priceless goblet with a priceless wine
Arising, show'd he drank beyond his use;
And when the feast was near an end, he said:

"There is a custom in the Orient, friends—
I read of it in Persia—when a man
Will honor those who feast with him, he brings
And shows them whatsoever he accounts
Of all his treasures the most beautiful,
Gold, jewels, arms, whatever it may be.
This custom"—

Pausing here a moment, all
The guests broke in upon him with meeting hands
And cries about the banquet—"Beautiful!
Who could desire more beauty at a feast?"

The lover answer'd, "There is more than one
Here sitting who desires it. Laud me not
Before my time, but hear me to the close.
This custom steps yet further when the guest
Is loved and honor'd to the uttermost.
For after he hath shown him gems or gold,
He brings and sets before him in rich guise
That which is thrice as beautiful as these,
The beauty that is dearest to his heart—
'O my heart's lord, would I could show you,' he says,
'Ev'n my heart too.' And I propose to-night
To show you what is dearest to my heart,
And my heart too.

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"But solve me first a doubt.
I knew a man, nor many years ago;
He had a faithful servant, one who loved
His master more than all on earth beside.
He falling sick, and seeming close on death,
His master would not wait until he died,
But bade his menials bear him from the door,
And leave him in the public way to die.
I knew another, not so long ago,
Who found the dying servant, took him home,
And fed, and cherish'd him, and saved his life.
I ask you now, should this first master claim
His service, whom does it belong to? him
Who thrust him out, or him who saved his life?"

This question, so flung down before the guests,
And balanced either way by each, at length
When some were doubtful how the law would hold,
Was handed over by consent of all
To one who had not spoken, Lionel.

Fair speech was his, and delicate of phrase.
And he beginning languidly—his loss
Weigh'd on him yet—but warming as he went,
Glanced at the point of law, to pass it by,
Affirming that as long as either lived,
By all the laws of love and gratefulness,
The service of the one so saved was due
All to the saver—adding, with a smile,
The first for many weeks—a semi-smile
As at a strong conclusion—"body and soul
And life and limbs, all his to work his will."

Then Julian made a secret sign to me
To bring Camilla down before them all.
And crossing her own picture as she came,
And looking as much lovelier as herself
Is lovelier than all others—on her head
A diamond circlet, and from under this
A veil, that seem'd no more than gilded air,

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Flying by each fine ear, an Eastern gauze
With seeds of gold—so, with that grace of hers,
Slow-moving as a wave against the wind,
That flings a mist behind it in the sun—
And bearing high in arms the mighty babe,
The younger Julian, who himself was crown'd
With roses, none so rosy as himself—
And over all her babe and her the jewels
Of many generations of his house
Sparkled and flash'd, for he had decked them out
As for a solemn sacrifice of love—
So she came in:—I am long in telling it,
I never yet beheld a thing so strange,
Sad, sweet, and strange together—floated in—
While all the guests in mute amazement rose—
And slowly pacing to the middle hall,
Before the board, there paused and stood, her breast
Hard-heaving, and her eyes upon her feet,
Not daring yet to glance at Lionel.
But him she carried, him nor lights nor feast
Dazed or amazed, nor eyes of men; who cared
Only to use his own, and staring wide
And hungering for the gilt and jewell'd world
About him, look'd, as he is like to prove,
When Julian goes, the lord of all he saw.

"My guests," said Julian: "you are honor'd now
Ev'n to the uttermost: in her behold
Of all my treasures the most beautiful,
Of all things upon earth the dearest to me."
Then waving us a sign to seat ourselves,
Led his dear lady to a chair of state.
And I, by Lionel sitting, saw his face
Fire, and dead ashes and all fire again
Thrice in a second, felt him tremble too,
And heard him muttering, "So like, so like;
She never had a sister. I knew none.
Some cousin of his and hers—O God, so like!"
And then he suddenly ask'd her if she were.
She shook, and cast her eyes down, and was dumb.

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And then some other question'd if she came
From foreign lands, and still she did not speak.
Another, if the boy were hers: but she
To all their queries answer'd not a word,
Which made the amazement more, till one of them
Said, shuddering, "Her spectre!" But his friend
Replied, in half a whisper, "Not at least
The spectre that will speak if spoken to.
Terrible pity, if one so beautiful
Prove, as I almost dread to find her, dumb!"

But Julian, sitting by her, answer'd all:
"She is but dumb, because in her you see
That faithful servant whom we spoke about,
Obedient to her second master now;
Which will not last. I have here to-night a guest
So bound to me by common love and loss—
What! shall I bind him more? in his behalf,
Shall I exceed the Persian, giving him
That which of all things is the dearest to me,
Not only showing? and he himself pronounced
That my rich gift is wholly mine to give.

"Now all be dumb, and promise all
Not to break in on what I say by word
Or whisper, while I show you all my heart."
And then began the story of his love
As here to-day, but not so wordily—
The passionate moment would not suffer that—
Past thro' his visions to the burial; thence
Down to this last strange hour in his own hall;
And then rose up, and with him all his guests
Once more as by enchantment; all but he,
Lionel, who fain had risen, but fell again.
And sat as if in chains—to whom he said:

"Take my free gift, my cousin, for your wife;
And were it only for the giver's sake,
And tho' she seem so like the one you lost,
Yet cast her not away so suddenly,

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Lest there be none left here to bring her back:
I leave this land for ever." Here he ceased.

Then taking his dear lady by one hand,
And bearing on one arm the noble babe,
He slowly brought them both to Lionel.
And there the widower husband and dead wife
Rush'd each at each with a cry, that rather seem'd
For some new death than for a life renew'd;
Whereat the very babe began to wail;
At once they turn'd, and caught and brought him in
To their charm'd circle, and, half-killing him
With kisses, round him closed and clasp't again.
But Lionel, when at last he freed himself
From wife and child, and lifted up a face
All over glowing with the sun of life,
And love, and boundless thanks—the sight of this
So frighted our good friend, that turning to me
And saying, "It is over: let us go"—
There were our horses ready at the doors—
We bade them no farewell, but mounting these
He past for ever from his native land;
And I with him, my Julian, back to mine.

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BALLADS AND OTHER POEMS

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TO

ALFRED TENNYSON,

MY GRANDSON.

GOLDEN-HAIR'D Ally whose name is one with mine,
Crazy with laughter and babble and earth's new wine,
Now that the flower of a year and a half is thine,
O little blossom, O mine, and mine of mine,
Glorious poet who never hast written a line,
Laugh, for the name at the head of my verse is thine.
May'st thou never be wrong'd by the name that is mine!

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THE FIRST QUARREL.

(IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.)

I.

WAIT a little," you say, "you are sure it'll all come right,"
But the boy was born i' trouble, an' looks so wan an' so white:
Wait! an' once I ha' waited — I hadn't to wait for long.
Now I wait, wait, wait for Harry. — No, no, you are doing me wrong!
Harry and I were married: the boy can hold up his head,
The boy was born in wedlock, but after my man was dead;
I ha' work'd for him fifteen years, an' I work an' I wait to the end.
I am all alone in the world, an' you are my only friend.

II.

Doctor, if *you* can wait, I'll tell you the tale o' my life.
When Harry an' I were children, he call'd me his own little wife;
I was happy when I was with him, an' sorry when he was away,
An' when we play'd together, I loved him better than play;
He workt me the daisy chain — he made me the cowslip ball,
He fought the boys that were rude an' I loved him better than all.
Passionate girl tho' I was, an' often at home in disgrace,
I never could quarrel with Harry — I had but to look in his face.

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III.

There was a farmer in Dorset of Harry's kin, that had need
Of a good stout lad at his farm; he sent, an' the father agreed;
So Harry was bound to the Dorsetshire farm for years an' for years;
I walked with him down to the quay, poor lad, an' we parted in tears.
The boat was beginning to move, we heard them a-ringing the bell,
"I 'll never love any but you, God bless you, my own little Nell."

IV.

I was a child, an' he was a child, an' he came to harm;
There was a girl, a hussy, that workt with him up at the farm,
One had deceived her an' left her alone with her sin an' her shame,
And so she was wicked with Harry; the girl was the most to blame.

V.

And years went over till I that was little had grown so tall,
The men would say of the maids "Our Nelly 's the flower of 'em all."
I did n't take heed o' *them*, but I taught myself all I could
To make a good wife for Harry, when Harry came home for good.

VI.

Often I seem'd unhappy, and often as happy too,
For I heard it abroad in the fields "I 'll never love any but you;"
I 'll never love any but you" the morning song of the lark,
"I 'll never love any but you" the nightingale's hymn in the dark.

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VII.

And Harry came home at last, but he look'd at me sidelong and shy,
Vext me a bit, till he told me that so many years had gone by,
I had grown so handsome and tall — that I might ha' forgot him somehow —
For he thought — there were other lads — he was fear'd to look at me now.

VIII.

Hard was the frost in the field, we were married o' Christmas day,
Married among the red berries, an' all as merry as May —
Those were the pleasant times, my house an' my man were my pride,
We seem'd like ships i' the Channel a-sailing with wind an' tide.

IX.

But work was scant in the Isle, tho' he tried the villages round,
So Harry went over the Solent to see if work could be found;
An' he wrote "I ha' six weeks' work, little wife, so far as I know;
I 'll come for an hour to-morrow, an' kiss you before I go."

X.

So I set to righting the house, for was n't he coming that day?
An' I hit on an old deal-box that was push'd in a corner away,
It was full of old odds an' ends, an' a letter along wi' the rest,
I had better ha' put my naked hand in a hornets' nest.

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XI.

"Sweetheart" — this was the letter — this was the letter I read —
"You promised to find me work near you, an' I wish I was dead —
Did n't you kiss me an' promise? you have n't done it, my lad,
An' I almost died o' your going away, an' I wish that I had."

XII.

I too wish that I had — in the pleasant times that had past,
Before I quarrell'd with Harry — *my* quarrel — the first an' the last.

XIII.

For Harry came in, an' I flung him the letter that drove me wild,
An' he told it me all at once, as simple as any child,
"What can it matter, my lass, what I did wi' my single life?
I ha' been as true to you as ever a man to his wife;
An' *she* was n't one o' the worst." "Then," I said, "I 'm none o' the best."
An' he smiled at me, "Ain't you, my love? Come, come, little wife, let it rest!
The man is n't like the woman, no need to make such a stir."
But he anger'd me all the more, an' I said "You were keeping with her,
When I was a-loving you all along an' the same as before."
An' he did n't speak for a while, an' he anger'd me more and more.
Then he patted my hand in his gentle way, "Let bygones be!"
"Bygones! you kept yours hush'd," I said, "when you married me!
Bygones ma' be come-agains; an' *she* — in her shame an' her sin —

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You 'll have her to nurse my child, if I die o' my lying in!
You 'll make her its second mother! I hate her — an' I hate you!"
Ah, Harry, my man, you had better ha' beaten me black an' blue
Than ha' spoken as kind as you did, when I were so crazy wi' spite,
"Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it 'll all come right."

XIV.

An' he took three turns in the rain, an' I watch'd him, an' when he came in
I felt that my heart was hard, he was all wet thro' to the skin,
An' I never said "off wi' the wet," I never said "on wi' the dry,"
So I knew my heart was hard, when he came to bid me good-by.
"You said that you hated me, Ellen, but that is n't true, you know;
I am going to leave you a bit — you 'll kiss me before I go?"

XV.

"Going! you 're going to her — kiss her — if you will," I said, —
I was near my time wi' the boy, I must ha' been light i' my head —
"I had sooner be cursed than kiss'd!" — I did n't know well what I meant,
But I turn'd my face from *him*, an' he turn'd *his* face an' he went.

XVI.

And then he sent me a letter, "I 've gotten my work to do;
You would n't kiss me, my lass, an' I never loved any but you;
I am sorry for all the quarrel an' sorry for what she wrote,
I ha' six weeks' work in Jersey an' go to-night by the boat.

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XVII.

An' the wind began to rise, an' I thought of him out at sea,
An' I felt I had been to blame; he was always kind to me.
"Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it 'll all come right" —
An' the boat went down that night — the boat went down that night.

RIZPAH.

17—.

I.

WAILING, wailing, wailing, the wind over land and sea —
And Willy's voice in the wind, "O mother, come out to me."
Why should he call me to-night, when he knows that I cannot go?
For the downs are as bright as day, and the full moon stares at the snow.

II.

We should be seen, my dear; they would spy us out of the town.
The loud black nights for us, and the storm rushing over the down,
When I cannot see my own hand, but am led by the creak of the chain,
And grovel and grope for my son till I find myself drenched with the rain.

III.

Any thing fallen again? nay — what was there left to fall?
I have taken them home, I have number'd the bones, I have hidden them all.
What am I saying? and what are *you?* do you come as a spy?
Falls? what falls? who knows? As the tree falls so must it lie.

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IV.

Who let her in? how long has she been? you — what have you heard?
Why did you sit so quiet? you never have spoken a word.
O — to pray with me — yes — a lady — none of their spies —
But the night has crept into my heart, and begun to darken my eyes.

V.

Ah — you, that have lived so soft, what should *you* know of the night,
The blast and the burning shame and the bitter frost and the fright?
I have done it, while you were asleep — you were only made for the day.
I have gather'd my baby together — and now you may go your way.

VI.

Nay — for it 's kind of you, Madam, to sit by an old dying wife.
But say nothing hard of my boy, I have only an hour of life.
I kiss'd my boy in the prison, before he went out to die.
"They dared me to do it," he said, and he never has told me a lie.
I whipt him for robbing an orchard once when he was but a child —
"The farmer dared me to do it," he said; he was always so wild —
And idle — and could n't be idle — my Willy — he never could rest.
The King should have made him a soldier, he would have been one of his best.

VII.

But he lived with a lot of wild mates, and they never would let him be good;
They swore that he dare not rob the mail, and he swore that he would;

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And he took no life, but he took one purse, and when all was done
He flung it among his fellows — I 'll none of it, said my son.

VIII.

I came into court to the Judge and the lawyers. I told them my tale,
God's own truth — but they kill'd him, they kill'd him for robbing the mail.
They hang'd him in chains for a show — we had always borne a good name —
To be hang'd for a thief — and then put away — is n't that enough shame?
Dust to dust — low down — let us hide! but they set him so high
That all the ships of the world could stare at him, passing by.
God 'll pardon the hell-black raven and horrible fowls of the air,
But not the black heart of the lawyer who kill'd him and hang'd him there.

IX.

And the jailer forced me away. I had bid him my last good-by;
They had fasten'd the door of his cell. "O mother!" I heard him cry.
I could n't get back tho' I tried, he had something further to say,
And now I never shall know it. The jailer forced me away.

X.

Then since I could n't but hear that cry of my boy that was dead,
They seized me and shut me up: they fasten'd me down on my bed.
"Mother, O mother!" — he call'd in the dark to me year after year —
They beat me for that, they beat me — you know that I could n't but hear;

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And then at the last they found I had grown so stupid and still
They let me abroad again — but the creatures had worked their will.

XI.

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of my bone was left —
I stole them all from the lawyers — and you, will you call it a theft? —
My baby, the bones that had suck'd me, the bones that had laughed and had cried —
Theirs? O no! they are mine — not theirs — they had moved in my side.

XII.

Do you think I was scared by the bones? I kiss'd 'em, I buried 'em all —
I can't dig deep, I am old — in the night by the churchyard wall.
My Willy 'll rise up whole when the trumpet of judgment 'ill sound,
But I charge you never to say that I laid him in holy ground.

XIII.

They would scratch him up — they would hang him again on the cursed tree.
Sin? O yes — we are sinners, I know — let all that be,
And read me a Bible verse of the Lord's good will toward men —
"Full of compassion and mercy, the Lord" — let me hear it again;
"Full of compassion and mercy — long-suffering." Yes, O yes!
For the lawyer is born but to murder — the Saviour lives but to bless.
He 'll never put on the black cap except for the worst of the worst,
And the first may be last — I have heard it in church — and the last may be first.

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Suffering — O long-suffering — yes, as the Lord must know,
Year after year in the mist and the wind and the shower and the snow.

XIV.

Heard, have you? what? they have told you he never repented his sin.
How do they know it! are *they* his mother? are *you* of his kin?
Heard! have you ever heard, when the storm on the downs began,
The wind that 'll wail like a child, and the sea that 'll moan like a man?

XV.

Election, Election and Reprobation — it 's all very well.
But I go to-night to my boy, and I shall not find him in Hell.
For I cared so much for my boy that the Lord has look'd into my care,
And He means me I 'm sure to be happy with Willy, I know not where.

XVI.

And if *he* be lost — but to save *my* soul, that is all your desire:
Do you think that I care for *my* soul if my boy be gone to the fire?
I have been with God in the dark — go, go, you may leave me alone —
You never have borne a child — you are just as hard as a stone.

XVII.

Madam, I beg your pardon! I think that you mean to be kind,
But I cannot hear what you say for my Willy's voice in the wind —
The snow and the sky so bright — he used but to call in the dark,
And he calls to me now from the church and not from the gibbet — for hark!

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Nay — you can hear it yourself — it is coming — shaking the walls —
Willy — the moon's in a cloud —— Good night. I am going. He calls.

THE NORTHERN COBBLER.

I.

WAÄIT till our Sally cooms in, fur thou mun a' sights[1] to tell.
Eh, but I be maäin glad to seeä tha sa 'arty an' well.
"Cast awaäy on a disolut land wi' a vartical soon!"[2]
Strange fur to goä fur to think what saäilors a' seëan an' a' doon;
"Summat to drink — sa' 'ot?" I 'a nowt but Adam's wine:
What's the 'eät o' this little 'ill-side to the 'eät o' the line?

II.

"What's i' tha bottle a-stanning theer?" I 'll tell tha. Gin.
But if thou wants thy grog, tha mun goä fur it down to the inn.
Naay — fur I be maäin-glad, but thaw tha was iver sa dry,
Thou gits naw gin fro' the bottle theer, an' I'll tell tha why.

III.

Meä an' thy sister was married, when wur it? back-end o' June,
Ten year sin', and wa 'greed as well as a fiddle i' tune:
I could fettle and clump owd booöts and shoes wi' the best on 'em all,
As fer as fro' Thursby thurn hup to Harmsby and Hutterby Hall.

[1] The vowels *aĭ*, pronounced separately, though in the closest conjunction, best render the sound of the long *i* and *y* in this dialect. But since such words as *cralĭn'*, *daĕin'*, *whaĭ*, *aĭ* (I), &c., look awkward except in a page of express phonetics, I have thought it better to leave the simple *i* and *y*, and to trust that my readers will give them the broader pronunciation.

[2] The *oo* short, as in "wood."

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We was busy as beeäs i' the bloom an' as 'appy as 'art could think,
An' then the babby wur burn, and then I taäkes to the drink.

IV.

An' I weänt gaäinsaäy it, my lad, thaw I be hafe shaämed on it now,
We could sing a good song at the Plow, we could sing a good song at the Plow;
Thaw once of a frosty night I slither'd an' hurted my huck,[1]
An' I coom'd neck-an-crop soometimes slaäpe down i' the squad an' the muck:
An' once I fowt wi' the Taäilor — not hafe ov a man, my lad —
Fur he scrawm'd an' scratted my faäce like a cat, an' it maäde 'er sa mad
That Sally she turn'd a tongue-banger,[2] an' raäted ma, "Sottin' thy braäins
Guzzlin' an' soäkin' an' smoäkin' an' hawmin'[3] about i' the laänes,
Soä sow-droonk that tha doesn not touch thy 'at to the Squire;"
An' I looök'd cock-eyed at my noäse an' I seeäd 'im a-gittin' o' fire;
But sin' I wur hallus i' liquor an' hallus as droonk as a king,
Foälks' coostom flitted awaäy like a kite wi' a brokken string.

V.

An' Sally she wesh'd foälks' cloäths to keep the wolf fro the door,
Eh but the moor she riled me, she druv me to drink the moor,
Fur I fun', when 'er back wur turn'd, wheer Sally's owd stockin' wur 'id,
An' I grabb'd the munny she maäde, and I weär'd it o liquor, I did.

[1] Hip. [2] Scold. [3] Lounging.

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VI.

An' one night I cooms 'oäm like a bull gotten loose at a faäir,
An' she wur a-waäitin fo'mma, an' cryin' an' teärin' 'er 'aäir,
An' I tummled athurt the craädle an' sweär'd as I'd breäk ivry stick
O' furnitur 'ere i' the 'ouse, an' I gied our Sally a kick,
An' I mash'd the taäbles an' chairs, an' she an' the babby beäl'd,[1]
Fur I knaw'd naw moor what I did nor a mortal beäst o' the feäld.

VII.

An' when I waäked i' the murnin' I seeäd that our Sally went laämed
Cos' o' the kick as I gied 'er, an' I wur dreädful ashaämed
An' Sally wur sloomy[2] an' draggle-taäil'd in an owd turn gown,
An' the babby's faäce wurn't wesh'd an' the 'ole 'ouse hup-side down.

VIII.

An' then I minded our Sally sa pratty an' neät an' sweeät,
Straät as a pole an' cleän as a flower fro' 'eäd to feeät:
An' then I minded the fust kiss I gied 'er by Thursby thurn;
Theer wur a lark a-singin' 'is best of a Sunday at murn,
Could n't see 'im, we 'eärd 'im a-mountin' oop 'igher an' 'igher,
An' then 'e turn'd to the sun, an' 'e shined like a sparkle o' fire.
"Does n't tha see 'im," she axes, "fur I can see 'im?" an' I
Seeäd nobbut the smile o' the sun as danced in 'er pratty blue eye;
An' I says "I mun gie tha a kiss," an' Sally says "Noä, thou moänt,"
But I gied 'er a kiss, an' then anoother, an' Sally says "doänt!"

[1] Bellowed, cried out.

[2] Sluggish, out of spirits.

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IX.

An' when we coom'd into Meeätin', at fust she wur all in a tew,
But, arter, we sing'd the 'ymn togither like birds on a beugh;
An' Muggins 'e preäch'd o' Hell-fire an' the loov o' God fur men,
An' then upo' coomin' awaäy Sally gied me a kiss ov 'ersen.

X.

Heer wur a fall fro' a kiss to a kick like Saätan as fell
Down out o' heaven i' Hell-fire — thaw theer 's naw drinkin i' Hell;
Meä fur to kick our Sally as kep' the wolf fro' the door,
All along o' the drink, fur I loov'd 'er as well as afoor.

XI.

Sa like a graät num-cumpus I blubber'd awaäy o' the bed —
"Weant niver do it naw moor;" an' Sally looökt up an' she said,
"I'll upowd it[1] tha weänt; thou 'rt laike the rest o' the men,
Thou 'll goä sniffin' about the tap till tha does it agëan.
Theer 's thy hennemy, man, an' I knaws, as knaws tha sa well,
That, if tha seeäs 'im an' smells 'im tha 'll foller 'im slick into Hell."

XII.

"Naäy," says I, "fur I weänt goä sniffin' about the tap."
"Weänt tha?" she says, an' mysen I thowt i' mysen "mayhap."
"Noa:" an' I started awaäy like a shot, an' down to the Hinn,
An' I browt what tha seeäs stannin' theer, yon big black bottle o' gin.

XIII.

"That caps owt,"[2] says Sally, an' saw she begins to cry,
But I puts it inter 'er 'ands an' I says to 'er, "Sally," says I,

[1] I 'll uphold it.

[2] That 's beyond everything.

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"Stan' 'im theer i' the naäme o' the Lord an' the power ov 'is Graäce,
Stan' 'im theer, fur I 'll look my hennemy straït i' the faäce,
Stan' 'im theer i' the winder, an' let ma looök at 'im then,
'E seeäms naw moor nor watter, an' 'e 's the Divil's oän sen."

XIV.

An' I wur down i' tha mouth, could n't do naw work an' all,
Nasty an' snaggy an' shaäky, an' poonch'd my 'and wi' the hawl,
But she wur a power o' coomfut, an' sattled 'ersen o' my knee,
An' coäxd an' coodled me oop till agëan I feel'd mysen free.

XV.

An' Sally she tell'd it about, an' foälk stood a-gawmin'[1] in,
As thaw it wur summat bewitch'd istead of a quart o' gin;
An' some on 'em said it wur watter — an' I wur chousin' the wife,
Fur I could n't 'owd 'ands off gin, wur it nobbut to saave my life:
An' blacksmith 'e strips me the thick ov 'is airm, an' 'e shaws it to me,
"Feëal thou this! thou can't graw this upo' watter!" says he.
An' Doctor 'e calls o' Sunday an' just as candles was lit,
"Thou moänt do it," he says, "tha mun breäk 'im off bit by bit.'
"Thou 'rt but a Methody-man," says Parson, and laäys down 'is 'at,
An' 'e points to the bottle o' gin, "but I respecks tha fur that;"
An' Squire, his oän very sen, walks down fro' the 'All to see,
An' 'e spanks 'is 'and into mine, "fur I respecks tha," says 'e;
An' coostom ageän draw'd in like a wind fro' far an' wide,
An' browt me the booöts to be coo.led fro' hafe the coontryside.

[1] Staring vacantly.

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XVI.

An' theer 'e stans an' theer 'e shall stan to my dying daäy;
I 'a gotten to loov 'im ageän in anoother kind of a waäy,
Proud on 'im, like, my lad, an' I keeäps 'im cleän an bright,
Loovs 'im, an' roobs 'im, an' doosts 'im, an' puts 'im back i' the light.

XVII.

Would n't a pint a' sarved as well as a quart? Naw doubt.
But I liked a bigger feller to fight wi' an' fowt it out.
Fine an' meller 'e mun be by this, if I cared to taäste,
But I moänt, my lad, and I weänt, fur I 'd feäl mysen cleän disgraäced.

XVIII.

An' once I said to the Missis, "My lass, when I cooms to die,
Smash the bottle to smithers, the Divil 's in 'im," said I.
But arter I chaänged my mind, an' if Sally be left aloän,
I 'll hev 'im a-buried wi'mma an' taake 'im afoor the Throan.

XIX.

Coom thou 'eer — yon laädy a-steppin' along the streeät,
Does n't tha knaw 'er — sa pratty, an' feät, an' neät, an' sweeät?
Look at the cloäths on 'er back, thebbe ammost spick-span-new,
An' Tommy's faäce is as fresh as a codlin 'at 's wesh'd 'i the dew.

XX.

'Ere 's our Sally an' Tommy, an' we be a-goin' to dine,
Baäcon an' taätes, an' a beslings-puddin'[1] an' Adam's wine;
But if tha wants ony grog tha mun goä fur it down to the Hinn,
Fur I weänt shed a drop on 'is blood, noa, not fur Sally's oän kin.

[1] A pudding made with the first milk of the cow after calving.

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THE REVENGE.

A BALLAD OF THE FLEET, 1591.

I.

AT Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay,
And a pinnace, like a flutter'd bird, came flying from far away:
"Spanish ships of war at sea! we have sighted fifty-three!"
Then sware Lord Thomas Howard: "'Fore God I am no coward!
But I cannot meet them here, for my ships are out of gear,
And the half of my men are sick. I must fly, but follow quick.
We are six ships of the line; can we fight with fifty-three?"

II.

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: "I know you are no coward;
You fly them for a moment to fight with them again.
But I 've ninety men and more that are lying sick ashore.
I should count myself the coward if I left them, my Lord Howard,
To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms of Spain."

III.

So Lord Howard past away with five ships of war that day,
Till he melted like a cloud in the silent summer heaven;
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick men from the land
Very carefully and slow,
Men of Bideford in Devon,

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And we laid them on the ballast down below;
For we brought them all aboard,
And they blest him in their pain, that they were not left to Spain,
To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the glory of the Lord.

IV.

He had only a hundred seamen to work the ship and to fight.
And he sail'd away from Flores till the Spaniard came in sight,
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the weather bow.
"Shall we fight or shall we fly?
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,
For to fight is but to die!
There'll be little of us left by the time the sun be set."
And Sir Richard said again: "We be all good Englishmen.
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children of the devil,
For I never turned my back upon Don or devil yet."

V.

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd, and we roared a hurrah, and so
The little "Revenge" ran on sheer into the heart of the foe,
With her hundred fighters on deck, and her ninety sick below;
For half of their fleet to the right and half to the left were seen,
And the little "Revenge" ran on thro' the long sea-lane between.

VI.

Thousands of their soldiers look'd down from their decks and laugh'd,
Thousands of their seamen made mock at the mad little craft
Running on and on, till delay'd
By their mountain-like "San Philip" that, of fifteen hundred tons,
And up-shadowing high above us with her yawning tiers o guns,
Took the breath from our sails, and we stay'd.

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VII.

And while now the great "San Philip" hung above us like a cloud
Whence the thunderbolt will fall
Long and loud,
Four galleons drew away
From the Spanish fleet that day,
And two upon the larboard and two upon the starboard lay,
And the battle-thunder broke from them all.

VIII.

But anon the great "San Philip," she bethought herself and went,
Having that within her womb that had left her ill-content;
And the rest they came aboard us, and they fought us hand to hand,
For a dozen times they came with their pikes and musqueteers,
And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog that shakes his ears
When he leaps from the water to the land.

IX.

And the sun went down, and the stars came out far over the summer sea,
But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and the fifty-three.
Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built galleons came,
Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her battle thunder and flame;
Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with her dead and her shame;
For some were sunk and many were shatter'd, and so could fight us no more —
God of battles, was ever a battle like this in the world before?

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x.

For he said "Fight on! fight on!"
Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck;
And it chanced that, when half of the summer night was gone,
With a grisly wound to be drest he had left the deck,
But a bullet struck him that was dressing it suddenly dead,
And himself he was wounded again in the side and the head,
And he said, "Fight on! fight on!"

xi.

And the night went down, and the sun smiled out far over the summer sea,
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay round us all in a ring;
But they dared not touch us again, for they fear'd that we still could sting,
So they watch'd what the end would be.
And we had not fought them in vain,
But in perilous plight were we,
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were slain,
And half of the rest of us maim'd for life
In the crash of the cannonades and the desperate strife;
And the sick men down in the hold were most of them stark and cold,
And the pikes were all broken or bent, and the powder was all of it spent;
And the masts and the rigging were lying over the side;
But Sir Richard cried in his English pride,
"We have fought such a fight for a day and a night
As may never be fought again!
We have won great glory, my men!
And a day less or more
At sea or ashore,
We die — does it matter when?
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner — sink her, split her in twain!
Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of Spain!"

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XII.

And the gunner said, "Ay, ay," but the seamen made reply:
"We have children, we have wives,
And the Lord hath spared our lives.
We will make the Spaniard promise, if we yield, to let us go;
We shall live to fight again, and to strike another blow."
And the lion there lay dying, and they yielded to the foe.

XIII.

And the stately Spanish men to their flagship bore him then,
Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir Richard caught at last,
And they praised him to his face with their courtly foreign grace;
But he rose upon their decks, and he cried:
"I have fought for Queen and Faith like a valiant man and true;
I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do:
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville die!"
And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

XIV.

And they stared at the dead that had been so valiant and true,
And had holden the power and glory of Spain so cheap
That he dared her with one little ship and his English few;
Was he devil or man? He was devil for aught they knew,
But they sank his body with honor down into the deep,
And they mann'd the "Revenge" with a swarthier alien crew,
And away she sail'd with her loss and long'd for her own;
When a wind from the lands they had ruin'd awoke from sleep,
And the water began to heave and the weather to moan,
And or ever that evening ended a great gale blew,
And a wave like the wave that is raised by an earthquake grew,

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Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and their masts
and their flags,
And the whole sea plunged and fell on the shot-shatter'd
navy of Spain,
And the little "Revenge" herself went down by the island
crags
To be lost evermore in the main.

THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW.

DEDICATORY POEM TO THE PRINCESS ALICE.

DEAD PRINCESS, living Power, if that, which lived
True life, live on — and if the fatal kiss,
Born of true life and love, divorce thee not
From earthly love and life — if what we call
The spirit flash not all at once from out
This shadow into Substance — then perhaps
The mellow'd murmur of the people's praise
From thine own State, and all our breadth of realm,
Where Love and Longing dress thy deeds in light,
Ascends to thee; and this March morn that sees
Thy Soldier-brother's bridal orange-bloom
Break thro' the yews and cypress of thy grave,
And thine Imperial mother smile again,
May send one ray to thee! and who can tell —
Thou — England's England-loving daughter — thou
Dying so English thou wouldst have her flag
Borne on thy coffin — where is he can swear
But that some broken gleam from our poor earth
May touch thee, while remembering thee, I lay
At the pale feet this ballad of the deeds
Of England, and her banner in the East?

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I.

BANNER of England, not for a season, O banner of Britain, hast thou
Floated in conquering battle or flapt to the battle-cry!
Never with mightier glory than when we had rear'd thee on high
Flying at top of the roofs in the ghastly siege of Lucknow —
Shot thro' the staff or the halyard, but ever we raised thee anew,
And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew.

II.

Frail were the works that defended the hold that we held with our lives —
Women and children among us, God help them, our children and wives?
Hold it we might — and for fifteen days or for twenty at most.
"Never surrender, I charge you, but every man die at his post!"
Voice of the dead whom we loved, our Lawrence the best of the brave:
Cold were his brows when we kiss'd him — we laid him that night in his grave.
"Every man die at his post!" and there hail'd on our houses and halls
Death from their rifle-bullets, and death from their cannon-balls,
Death in our innermost chamber, and death at our slight barricade,
Death while we stood with the musket, and death while we stoopt to the spade,
Death to the dying, and wounds to the wounded, for often there fell
Striking the hospital wall, crashing thro' it, their shot and their shell,

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Death — for their spies were among us, their marksmen were told of our best,
So that the brute bullet broke thro' the brain that could think for the rest;
Bullets would sing by our foreheads, and bullets would rain at our feet —
Fire from ten thousand at once of the rebels that girdled us round —
Death at the glimpse of a finger from over the breadth of a street,
Death from the heights of the mosque and the palace, and death in the ground!
Mine? yes, a mine! Countermine! down, down! and creep thro' the hole!
Keep the revolver in hand! You can hear him — the murderous mole.
Quiet, ah! quiet — wait till the point of the pickaxe be thro'!
Click with the pick, coming nearer and nearer again than before —
Now let it speak, and you fire, and the dark pioneer is no more;
And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew.

III.

Ay, but the foe sprung his mine many times, and it chanced on a day
Soon as the blast of that underground thunderclap echo'd away,
Dark thro' the smoke and the sulphur like so many fiends in their hell —
Cannon-shot, musket-shot, volley on volley, and yell upon yell —
Fiercely on all the defences our myriad enemy fell.
What have they done? where is it? Out yonder. Guard the Redan!
Storm at the Water-gate! storm at the Bailey-gate! storm, and it ran

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Surging and swaying all round us, as ocean on every side
Plunges and heaves at a bank that is daily drown'd by the tide —
So many thousands that if they be bold enough, who shall escape?
Kill or be kill'd, live or die, they shall know we are soldiers and men!
Ready! take aim at their leaders — their masses are gapp'd with our grape —
Backward they reel like the wave, like the wave flinging forward again,
Flying and foil'd at the last by the handful they could not subdue;
And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew.

IV.

Handful of men as we were, we were English in heart and in limb,
Strong with the strength of the race to command, to obey, to endure,
Each of us fought as if hope for the garrison hung but on him;
Still — could we watch at all points? we were every day fewer and fewer.
There was a whisper among us, but only a whisper that past;
"Children and wives — if the tigers leap into the fold unawares —
Every man die at his post — and the foe may outlive us at last —
Better to fall by the hands that they love, than to fall into theirs!"
Roar upon roar in a moment two mines by the enemy sprung
Clove into perilous chasms our walls and our poor palisades.
Rifleman, true is your heart, but be sure that your hand be as true!
Sharp is the fire of assault, better aim'd are your flank fusillades —

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Twice do we hurl them to earth from the ladders to which they had clung,
Twice from the ditch where they shelter we drive them with hand-grenades;
And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew.

V.

Then on another wild morning another wild earthquake outtore
Clean from our lines of defence ten or twelve good paces or more.
Rifleman, high on the roof, hidden there from the light of the sun —
One has leapt up on the breach, crying out: "Follow me, follow me!" —
Mark him — he falls! then another, and *him* too, and down goes he.
Had they been bold enough then, who can tell but the traitors had won?
Boardings and rafters and doors — an embrasure! make way for the gun!
Now double charge it with grape! It is charged and we fire, and they run.
Praise to our Indian brothers, and let the dark face have his due!
Thanks to the kindly dark faces who fought with us, faithful and few,
Fought with the bravest among us, and drove them, and smote them, and slew,
That ever upon the topmost roof our banner in India blew.

VI.

Men will forget what we suffer and not what we do. We can fight!
But to be soldier all day and be sentinel all thro' the night —
Ever the mine and assault, our sallies, their lying alarms.
Bugles and drums in the darkness, and shoutings and sounds ings to arms,

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Ever the labor of fifty that had to be done by five,
Ever the marvel among us that one should be left alive,
Ever the day with its traitorous death from the loopholes around,
Ever the night with its coffinless corpse to be laid in the ground,
Heat like the mouth of a hell, or a deluge of cataract skies,
Stench of old offal decaying, and infinite torment of flies,
Thoughts of the breezes of May blowing over an English field,
Cholera, scurvy, and fever, the wound that *would* not be heal'd,
Lopping away of the limb by the pitiful-pitiless knife,—
Torture and trouble in vain,—for it never could save us a life,
Valor of delicate women who tended the hospital bed,
Horror of women in travail among the dying and dead,
Grief for our perishing children, and never a moment for grief,
Toil and ineffable weariness, faltering hopes of relief,
Havelock baffled, or beaten, or butcher'd for all that we knew—
Then day and night, day and night, coming down on the still-shatter'd walls
Millions of musket-bullets, and thousands of cannon-balls —
But ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew.

VII.

Hark cannonade, fusillade! is it true what was told by the scout,
Outram and Havelock breaking their way thro' the fell mutineers?
Surely the pibroch of Europe is ringing again in our ears!
All on a sudden the garrison utter a jubilant shout,
Havelock's glorious Highlanders answer with conquering cheers,
Sick from the hospital echo them, women and children come out,
Blessing the wholesome white faces of Havelock's good fusileers.

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Kissing the war-harden'd hand of the Highlander wet with their tears!
Dance to the pibroch! — saved! we are saved! — is it you? is it you?
Saved by the valor of Havelock, saved by the blessing of Heaven!
"Hold it for fifteen days!" we have held it for eighty-seven!
And ever aloft on the palace roof the old banner of England blew.

IN THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL.

EMMIE.

I.

OUR doctor had call'd in another, I never had seen him before,
But he sent a chill to my heart when I saw him come in at the door,
Fresh from the surgery-schools of France and of other lands —
Harsh red hair, big voice, big chest, big merciless hands!
Wonderful cures he had done, O yes, but they said too of him
He was happier using the knife than in trying to save the limb,
And that I can well believe, for he look'd so coarse and so red,
I could think he was one of those who would break their jests on the dead,
And mangle the living dog that had loved him and fawn'd at his knee —
Drench'd with the hellish oorali — that ever such things should be!

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II.

Here was a boy — I am sure that some of our children would die
But for the voice of Love, and the smile, and the comforting eye —
Here was a boy in the ward, every bone seem'd out of its place —
Caught in a mill and crush'd — it was all but a hopeless case:
And he handled him gently enough; but his voice and his face were not kind,
And it was but a hopeless case, he had seen it and made up his mind,
And he said to me roughly, "The lad will need little more of your care."
"All the more need," I told him, "to seek the Lord Jesus in prayer;
They are all his children here, and I pray for them all as my own:"
But he turn'd to me, "Ay, good woman, can prayer set a broken bone?"
Then he mutter'd half to himself, but I know that I heard him say
"All very well — but the good Lord Jesus has had his day."

III.

Had? has it come? It has only dawn'd. It will come by and by.
O how could I serve in the wards if the hope of the world were a lie?
How could I bear with the sights and the loathsome smells of disease,
But that He said "Ye do it to me, when ye do it to these"?

IV.

So he went. And we past to this ward where the younger children are laid:
Here is the cot of our orphan, our darling, our meek little maid;

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Empty you see just now! We have lost her who loved her so much —
Patient of pain tho' as quick as a sensitive plant to the touch;
Hers was the prettiest prattle, it often moved me to tears,
Hers was the gratefullest heart I have found in a child of her years —
Nay you remember our Emmie; you used to send her the flowers;
How she would smile at 'em, play with 'em, talk to 'em hours after hours!
They that can wander at will where the works of the Lord are reveal'd
Little guess what joy can be got from a cowslip out of the field;
Flowers to these "spirits in prison" are all they can know of the spring,
They freshen and sweeten the wards like the waft of an Angel's wing;
And she lay with a flower in one hand and her thin hands crost on her breast —
Wan, but as pretty as heart can desire, and we thought her at rest,
Quietly sleeping — so quiet, our doctor said "Poor little dear,
Nurse, I must do it to-morrow; she 'll never live thro' it, I fear."

V.

I walk'd with our kindly old doctor as far as the head of the stair,
Then I return'd to the ward; the child did n't see I was there.

VI.

Never since I was nurse, had I been so grieved and so vext
Emmie had heard him. Softly she call'd from her cot to the next,
"He says I shall never live thro' it, O Annie, what shall I do?"

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Annie consider'd. "If 'I," said the wise little Annie, "was you,
I should cry to the dear Lord Jesus to help me, for, Emmie, you see,
It 's all in the picture there: 'Little children should come to me.'" ——
(Meaning the print that you gave us, I find that it always can please
Our children, the dear Lord Jesus with children about his knees.)
"Yes, and I will," said Emmie, "but then if I call to the Lord,
How should he know that it 's me? such a lot of beds in the ward!"
That was a puzzle for Annie. Again she consider'd and said: —
"Emmie, you put out your arms, and you leave 'em outside on the bed —
The Lord has so *much* to see to! but, Emmie, you tell it him plain,
It 's the little girl with her arms lying out on the counterpane."

VII.

I had sat three nights by the child — I could not watch her for four —
My brain had begun to reel — I felt I could do it no more.
That was my sleeping-night, but I thought that it never would pass.
There was a thunder-clap once, and a clatter of hail on the glass,
And there was a phantom cry that I heard as I tost about,
The motherless bleat of a lamb in the storm and the darkness without;
My sleep was broken besides with dreams of the dreadful knife
And fears for our delicate Emmie who scarce would escape with her life;

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Then in the gray of the morning it seem'd she stood by me
and smiled,
And the doctor came at his hour, and we went to see to the
child.

VIII.

He had brought his ghastly tools: we believed her asleep
again —
Her dear, long, lean, little arms lying out on the counter-
pane;
Say that His day is done! Ah why should we care what
they say?
The Lord of the children had heard her, and Emmie had
past away.

SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE, LORD COBHAM.

(IN WALES.)

MY friend should meet me somewhere hereabout
To take me to that hiding in the hills.

I have broke their cage, no gilded one, I trow —
I read no more the prisoner's mute wail
Scribbled or carved upon the pitiless stone;
I find hard rocks, hard life, hard cheer, or none,
For I am emptier than a friar's brains;
But God is with me in this wilderness,
These wet black passes and foam-churning chasms —
And God's free air, and hope of better things.
I would I knew their speech; not now to glean
Not now — I hope to do it — some scatter'd ears,
Some ears for Christ in this wild field of Wales —
But, bread, merely for bread. This tongue that wagg'd
They said with such heretical arrogance
Against the proud archbishop Arundel —
So much God's cause was fluent in it — is here

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But as a Latin Bible to the crowd;
"Bara!" — what use? The Shepherd, when I speak,
Veiling a sullen eyelid with his hard
"Dim Saesneg" passes, wroth at things of old —
No fault of mine. Had he God's word in Welsh
He might be kindlier: happily come the day!
Not least art thou, thou little Bethlehem
In Judah, for in thee the Lord was born;
Nor thou in Britain, little Lutterworth,
Least, for in thee the word was born again.

Heaven-sweet Evangel, ever living word,
Who whilom spakest to the South in Greek
About the soft Mediterranean shores,
And then in Latin to the Latin crowd,
As good need was — thou hast come to talk our isle.
Hereafter thou, fulfilling Pentecost,
Must learn to use the tongues of all the world.
Yet art thou thine own witness that thou bringest
Not peace, a sword, a fire.
What did he say,
My frighted Wiclif-preacher whom I crost
In flying hither? that one night a crowd
Throng'd the waste field about the city gates:
The king was on them suddenly with a host.
Why there? they came to hear their preacher. Then
Some cried on Cobham, on the good Lord Cobham;
Ay, for they love me! but the king — nor voice
Nor finger raised against him — took and hang'd,
Took, hang'd and burnt — how many — thirty-nine —
Call'd it rebellion — hang'd, poor friends, as rebels
And burn'd alive as heretics! for your Priest
Labels — to take the king along with him —
All heresy, treason: but to call men traitors
May make men traitors.
Rose of Lancaster,
Red in thy birth, redder with household war,
Now reddest with the blood of holy men,

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Redder to be, red rose of Lancaster —
If somewhere in the North, as Rumor sang
Fluttering the hawks of this crown-lusting line —
By firth and loch thy silver sister grow,[1]
That were my rose, there my allegiance due.
Self-starved, they say — nay, murder'd: doubtless dead.
So to this king I cleaved: my friend was he,
Once my fast friend: I would have given my life
To help his own from scathe, a thousand lives
To save his soul. He might have come to learn
Our Wiclif's learning: but the worldly Priests
Who fear the king's hard common-sense should find
What rotten piles uphold their mason-work,
Urge him to foreign war. O had he will'd
I might have stricken a lusty stroke for him,
But he would not; far liever led my friend
Back to the pure and universal church,
But he would not: whether that heirless flaw
In his throne's title make him feel so frail,
He leans on Antichrist; or that his mind,
So quick, so capable in soldiership,
In matters of the faith, alas the while!
More worth than all the kingdoms of this world,
Runs in the rut, a coward to the Priest.

Burnt — good Sir Roger Acton, my dear friend!
Burnt too, my faithful preacher, Beverley!
Lord give thou power to thy two witnesses!
Lest the false faith make merry over them!
Two — nay but thirty-nine have risen and stand,
Dark with the smoke of human sacrifice,
Before thy light, and cry continually —
Cry — against whom?
Him, who should bear the sword
Of Justice — what! the kingly, kindly boy;
Who took the world so easily heretofore,

[1] Richard II.

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My boon companion, tavern-fellow — him
Who gibed and japed — in many a merry tale
That shook our sides — at Pardoners, Summoners,
Friars, absolution-sellers, monkeries
And nunneries, when the wild hour and the wine
Had set the wits aflame.
Harry of Monmouth,
Or Amurath of the East?
Better to sink
Thy fleurs-de-lys in slime again, and fling
Thy royalty back into the riotous fits
Of wine and harlotry — thy shame, and mine,
Thy comrade — than to persecute the Lord,
And play the Saul that never will be Paul.

Burnt, burnt! and while this mitred Arundel
Dooms our unlicensed preacher to the flame,
The mitre-sanction'd harlot draws his clerks
Into the suburb — their hard celibacy,
Sworn to be veriest ice of pureness, molten
Into adulterous living, or such crimes
As holy Paul — a shame to speak of them —
Among the heathen —
Sanctuary granted
To bandit, thief, assassin — yea to him
Who hacks his mother's throat — denied to him,
Who finds the Saviour in his mother tongue.
The Gospel, the Priest's pearl, flung down to swine —
The swine, lay-men, lay-women, who will come,
God willing, to outlearn the filthy friar.
Ah rather, Lord, than that thy Gospel, meant
To course and range thro' all the world, should be
Tether'd to these dead pillars of the Church —
Rather than so, if thou wilt have it so,
Burst vein, snap sinew, and crack heart, and life
Pass in the fire of Babylon! but how long,
O Lord, how long!

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My friend should meet me here.
Here is the copse, the fountain and — a Cross!
To thee, dead wood, I bow not head nor knees.
Rather to thee, green boscage, work of God,
Black holly, and white-flower'd wayfaring tree!
Rather to thee, thou living water, drawn
By this good Wiclif mountain down from heaven,
And speaking clearly in thy native tongue —
No Latin — He that thirsteth, come and drink!

Eh! how I anger'd Arundel asking me
To worship Holy Cross! I spread mine arms,
God's work, I said, a cross of flesh and blood
And holier. That was heresy. (My good friend
By this time should be with me.) "Images?"
"Bury them as God's truer images
Are daily buried." "Heresy. — Penance?" "Fast,
Hairshirt and scourge — nay, let a man repent,
Do penance in his heart, God hears him." "Heresy —
Not shriven, not saved?" "What profits an ill Priest
Between me and my God? I would not spurn
Good counsel of good friends, but shrive myself,
No, not to an Apostle." "Heresy."
(My friend is long in coming.) "Pilgrimages?"
"Drink, bagpipes, revelling, devil's-dances, vice.
The poor man's money gone to fat the friar.
Who reads of begging saints in scripture?" — "Heresy" —
(Hath he been here — not found me — gone again?
Have I mislearnt our place of meeting?) "Bread —
Bread left after the blessing?" how they stared,
That was their main test-question — glared at me!
"He veil'd Himself in flesh, and now He veils
His flesh in bread, body and bread together."
Then rose the howl of all the cassock'd wolves,
"No bread, no bread. God's body!" Archbishop, Bishop
Priors, Canons, Friars, bell-ringers, Parish-clerks —
"No bread, no bread!" — "Authority of the Church,
Power of the keys!" —Then I, God help me, I

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So mock'd, so spurn'd, so baited two whole days —
I lost myself and fell from evenness,
And rail'd at all the Popes, that ever since
Sylvester shed the venom of world-wealth
Into the church, had only prov'n themselves
Poisoners, murderers. Well — God pardon all —
Me, them, and all the world — yea, that proud Priest,
That mock-meek mouth of utter Antichrist,
That traitor to King Richard and the truth,
Who rose and doom'd me to the fire.
Amen!
Nay, I can burn, so that the Lord of life
Be by me in my death.
Those three! the fourth
Was like the son of God. Not burnt were they.
On *them* the smell of burning had not past.
That was a miracle to convert the king.
These Pharisees, this Caiaphas-Arundel
What miracle could turn? *He* here again.
He thwarting their traditions of Himself,
He would be found a heretic to Himself.
And doom'd to burn alive.

So, caught, I burn.
Burn? heathen men have borne as much as this,
For freedom, or the sake of those they loved,
Or some less cause, some cause far less than mine;
For every other cause is less than mine.
The moth will singe her wings, and singed return,
Her love of light quenching her fear of pain —
How now, my soul, we do not heed the fire?
Faint-hearted? tut! — faint-stomach'd! faint as I am,
God willing, I will burn for Him.

Who comes?
A thousand marks are set upon my head.
Friend? — foe perhaps — a tussle for it then!
Nay, but my friend. Thou art so well disguised,

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I knew thee not. Hast thou brought bread with thee?
I have not broken bread for fifty hours.
None? I am damn'd already by the Priest
For holding there was bread where bread was none —
No bread. My friends await me yonder? Yes.
Lead on then. *Up* the mountain? Is it far?
Not far. Climb first and reach me down thy hand.
I am not like to die for lack of bread,
For I must live to testify by fire.[1]

COLUMBUS.

CHAINS, my good lord: in your raised brows I read
Some wonder at our chamber ornaments.
We brought this iron from our isles of gold.

Does the king know you deign to visit him
Whom once he rose from off his throne to greet
Before his people, like his brother king?
I saw your face that morning in the crowd.

At Barcelona — tho' you were not then
So bearded. Yes. The city deck'd herself
To meet me, roar'd my name; the king, the queen
Bade me be seated, speak, and tell them all
The story of my voyage, and while I spoke
The crowd's roar fell as at the "Peace, be still!"
And when I ceased to speak, the king, the queen
Sank from their thrones, and melted into tears,
And knelt, and lifted hand and heart and voice
In praise to God who led me thro' the waste.
And then the great "Laudamus" rose to heaven.

Chains for the Admiral of the Ocean! chains
For him who gave a new heaven, a new earth,

[1] He was burnt on Christmas Day, 1417.

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As holy John had prophesied of me,
Gave glory and more empire to the kings
Of Spain than all their battles! chains for him
Who push'd his prows into the setting sun,
And made West East, and sail'd the Dragon's mouth,
And came upon the Mountain of the World,
And saw the rivers roll from Paradise!

Chains! we are Admirals of the Ocean, we,
We and our sons forever. Ferdinand
Hath sign'd it and our Holy Catholic queen —
Of the Ocean — of the Indies — Admirals we —
Our title, which we never mean to yield,
Our guerdon not alone for what we did,
But our amends for all we might have done —
The vast occasion of our stronger life —
Eighteen long years of waste, seven in your Spain,
Lost, showing courts and kings a truth the babe
Will suck in with his milk hereafter — earth
A sphere.

Were *you* at Salamanca? No.
We fronted there the learning of all Spain,
All their cosmogonies, their astronomies:
Guess-work *they* guess'd it, but the golden guess
Is morning-star to the full round of truth.
No guess-work! I was certain of my goal;
Some thought it heresy; that would not hold.
King David call'd the heavens a hide, a tent
Spread over earth, and so this earth was flat:
Some cited old Lactantius: could it be
That trees grew downward, rain fell upward, men
Walk'd like the fly on ceilings? and besides
The great Augustine wrote that none could breathe
Within the zone of heat; so might there be
Two Adams, two mankinds, and that was clean
Against God's word: thus was I beaten back,
And chiefly to my sorrow by the Church,

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And thought to turn my face from Spain, appeal
Once more to France or England; but our Queen
Recall'd me, for at last their Highnesses
Were half-assured this earth might be a sphere.
All glory to the all-blessed Trinity,
All glory to the mother of our Lord,
And Holy Church, from whom I never swerved
Not even by one hair's-breadth of heresy,
I have accomplish'd what I came to do.

Not yet — not all — last night a dream — I sail'd
On my first voyage, harass'd by the frights
Of my first crew, their curses and their groans.
The great flame-banner borne by Teneriffe,
The compass, like an old friend false at last
In our most need, appall'd them, and the wind
Still westward, and the weedy seas — at length
The landbird, and the branch with berries on it,
The carven staff — and last the light, the light
On Guanahani! but I changed the name;
San Salvador I call'd it; and the light
Grew as I gazed, and brought out a broad sky
Of dawning over — not those alien palms,
The marvel of that fair new nature — not
That Indian isle, but our most ancient East
Moriah with Jerusalem; and I saw
The glory of the Lord flash up, and beat
Thro' all the homely town from jasper, sapphire,
Chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius,
Chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase,
Jacinth, and amethyst — and those twelve gates,
Pearl — and I woke, and thought — death — I shall die —
I am written in the Lamb's own Book of Life
To walk within the glory of the Lord
Sunless and moonless, utter light — but no!
The Lord had sent this bright, strange dream to me
To mind me of the secret vow I made
When Spain was waging war against the Moor —

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I strove myself with Spain against the Moor.
There came two voices from the Sepulchre,
Two friars crying that if Spain should oust
The Moslem from her limit, he, the fierce
Soldan of Egypt, would break down and raze
The blessed tomb of Christ; whereon I vow'd
That, if our Princes harken'd to my prayer,
Whatever wealth I brought from that new world
Should, in this old, be consecrate to lead
A new crusade against the Saracen,
And free the Holy Sepulchre from thrall.

Gold? I had brought your Princes gold enough
If left alone! Being but a Genovese,
I am handled worse than had I been a Moor,
And breach'd the belting wall of Cambalu,
And given the Great Khan's palaces to the Moor,
Or clutch'd the sacred crown of Prester John,
And cast it to the Moor: but *had* I brought
From Solomon's now-recover'd Ophir all
The gold that Solomon's navies carried home,
Would that have gilded *me?* Blue blood of Spain,
Tho' quartering your own royal arms of Spain,
I have not: blue blood and black blood of Spain,
The noble and the convict of Castile,
Howl'd me from Hispaniola; for you know
The flies at home, that ever swarm about
And cloud the highest heads, and murmur down
Truth in the distance — these out-buzz'd me so
That even our prudent king, our righteous queen —
I pray'd them being so calumniated
They would commission one of weight and worth
To judge between my slander'd self and me —
Fonseca my main enemy at their court,
They send me out *his* tool, Bovadilla, one
As ignorant and impolitic as a beast —
Blockish irreverence, brainless greed — who sack'd
My dwelling, seized upon my papers, loosed

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My captives, feed the rebels of the crown,
Sold the crown-farms for all but nothing, gave
All but free leave for all to work the mines,
Drove me and my good brothers home in chains,
And gathering ruthless gold — a single piece
Weigh'd nigh four thousand Castillanos — so
They tell me — weigh'd him down into the abysm —
The hurricane of the latitude on him fell,
The seas of our discovering over-roll
Him and his gold; the frailer caravel,
With what was mine, came happily to the shore.
There was a glimmering of God's hand.

And God
Hath more than glimmer'd on me. O my lord,
I swear to you I heard his voice between
The thunders in the black Veragua nights,
"O soul of little faith, slow to believe!
Have I not been about thee from thy birth?
Given thee the keys of the great Ocean-sea?
Set thee in light till time shall be no more?
Is it I who have deceived thee or the world?
Endure! thou hast done so well for men, that men
Cry out against thee: was it otherwise
With mine own Son?"

And more than once in days
Of doubt and cloud and storm, when drowning hope
Sank all but out of sight, I heard his voice,
"Be not cast down. I lead thee by the hand,
Fear not." And I shall hear his voice again —
I know that he has led me all my life,
I am not yet too old to work his will —
His voice again.

Still for all that, my lord,
I lying here bedridden and alone,
Cast off, put by, scouted by court and king —

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The first discoverer starves — his followers, all
Flower into fortune — our world's way — and I,
Without a roof that I can call mine own,
With scarce a coin to buy a meal withal,
And seeing what a door for scoundrel scum
I open'd to the West, thro' which the lust,
Villany, violence, avarice, of your Spain
Pour'd in on all those happy naked isles —
Their kindly native princes slain or slaved,
Their wives and children Spanish concubines,
Their innocent hospitalities quench'd in blood,
Some dead of hunger, some beneath the scourge,
Some over-labor'd, some by their own hands, —
Yea, the dear mothers, crazing Nature, kill
Their babies at the breast for hate of Spain —
Ah, God, the harmless people whom we found
In Hispaniola's island-Paradise!
Who took us for the very Gods from Heaven,
And we have sent them very fiends from Hell;
And I myself, myself not blameless, I
Could sometimes wish I had never led the way.

Only the ghost of our great Catholic Queen
Smiles on me, saying, "Be thou comforted!
This creedless people will be brought to Christ
And own the holy governance of Rome."

But who could dream that we, who bore the Cross
Thither, were excommunicated there,
For curbing crimes that scandalized the Cross,
By him, the Catalonian Minorite,
Rome's Vicar in our Indies? who believe
These hard memorials of our truth to Spain
Clung closer to us for a longer term
Than any friend of ours at Court? and yet
Pardon — too harsh, unjust. I am rack'd with pains.

You see that I have hung them by my bed,
And I will have them buried in my grave.

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Sir, in that flight of ages which are God's
Own voice to justify the dead — perchance
Spain once the most chivalric race on earth,
Spain then the mightiest, wealthiest realm on earth,
So made by me, may seek to unbury me,
To lay me in some shrine of this old Spain,
Or in that vaster Spain I leave to Spain.
Then some one standing by my grave will say,
"Behold the bones of Christopher Colòn" —
"Ay, but the chains, what do *they* mean — the chains?" —
I sorrow for that kindly child of Spain
Who then will have to answer, "These same chains
Bound these same bones back thro' the Atlantic sea,
Which he unchain'd for all the world to come."

O Queen of Heaven who seest the souls in Hell
And purgatory, I suffer all as much
As they do — for the moment. Stay, my son
Is here anon: my son will speak for me
Ablier than I can in these spasms that grind
Bone against bone. You will not. One last word.

You move about the Court, I pray you tell
King Ferdinand who plays with me, that one,
Whose life has been no play with him and his
Hidalgos — shipwrecks, famines, fevers, fights,
Mutinies, treacheries — wink'd at, and condoned —
That I am loyal to him till the death,
And ready — tho' our Holy Catholic Queen,
Who fain had pledged her jewels on my first voyage,
Whose hope was mine to spread the Catholic faith,
Who wept with me when I return'd in chains,
Who sits beside the blessed Virgin now,
To whom I send my prayer by night and day —
She is gone — but you will tell the King, that I,
Rack'd as I am with gout, and wrench'd with pains
Gain'd in the service of His Highness, yet
Am ready to sail forth on one last voyage,

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And readier, if the King would hear, to lead
One last crusade against the Saracen,
And save the Holy Sepulchre from thrall.

Going? I am old and slighted: you have dared
Somewhat perhaps in coming? my poor thanks!
I am but an alien and a Genovese.

THE VOYAGE OF MAELDUNE.

(Founded on an Irish Legend. A. D. 700.)

I.

I WAS the chief of the race — he had stricken my father dead —
But I gather'd my fellows together, I swore I would strike off his head.
Each of them look'd like a king, and was noble in birth as in worth,
And each of them boasted he sprang from the oldest race upon earth.
Each was as brave in the fight as the bravest hero of song,
And each of them liefer had died than have done one another a wrong.
He lived on an isle in the ocean — we sail'd on a Friday morn —
He that had slain my father the day before I was born.

II.

And we came to the isle in the ocean, and there on the shore was he.
But a sudden blast blew us out and away thro' a boundless sea.

III.

And we came to the Silent Isle that we never had touch'd at before,
Where a silent ocean always broke on a silent shore,

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And the brooks glitter'd on in the light without sound, and the long waterfalls
Pour'd in a thunderless plunge to the base of the mountain walls,
And the poplar and cypress unshaken by storm flourish'd up beyond sight,
And the pine shot aloft from the crag to an unbelievable height,
And high in the heaven above it there flicker'd a songless lark,
And the cock could n't crow, and the bull could n't low, and the dog could n't bark.
And round it we went, and thro' it, but never a murmur, a breath —
It was all of it fair as life, it was all of it quiet as death,
And we hated the beautiful Isle, for whenever we strove to speak
Our voices were thinner and fainter than any flitter-mouse-shriek;
And the men that were mighty of tongue and could raise such a battle-cry
That a hundred who heard it would rush on a thousand lances and die —
O they to be dumb'd by the charm! — so fluster'd with anger were they
They almost fell on each other; but after we sail'd away.

IV.

And we came to the Isle of Shouting, we landed, a score of wild birds
Cried from the topmost summit with human voices and words;
Once in an hour they cried, and wherever their voices peal'd
The steer fell down at the plow and the harvest died from the field,
And the men dropt dead in the valleys and half of the cattle went lame,
And the roof sank in on the hearth, and the dwelling broke into flame;

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And the shouting of these wild birds ran into the hearts of my crew,
Till they shouted along with the shouting and seized one another and slew;
But I drew them the one from the other; I saw that we could not stay,
And we left the dead to the birds and we sail'd with our wounded away.

v.

And we came to the Isle of Flowers: their breath met us out on the seas,
For the Spring and the middle Summer sat each on the lap of the breeze;
And the red passion-flower to the cliffs, and the dark blue clematis, clung,
And starr'd with a myriad blossom the long convolvulus hung;
And the topmost spire of the mountain was lilies in lieu of snow,
And the lilies like glaciers winded down, running out below
Thro' the fire of the tulip and poppy, the blaze of gorse, and the blush
Of millions of roses that sprang without leaf or a thorn from the bush;
And the whole isle-side flashing down from the peak without ever a tree
Swept like a torrent of gems from the sky to the blue of the sea;
And we roll'd upon capes of crocus and vaunted our kith and our kin,
And we wallow'd in beds of lilies, and chanted the triumph of Finn,
Till each like a golden image was pollen'd from head to feet
And each was as dry as a cricket, with thirst in the middle-day heat.
Blossom and blossom, and promise of blossom, but never a fruit!
And we hated the Flowering Isle, as we hated the isle that was mute,

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And we tore up the flowers by the million and flung them in bight and bay,
And we left but a naked rock, and in anger we sail'd away

VI.

And we came to the Isle of Fruits: all round from the cliffs and the capes,
Purple or amber, dangled a hundred fathom of grapes,
And the warm melon lay like a little sun on the tawny sand,
And the fig ran up from the beach and rioted over the land,
And the mountain arose like a jewell'd throne thro' the fragrant air,
Glowing with all-color'd plums and with golden masses of pear,
And the crimson and scarlet of berries that flamed upon bine and vine,
But in every berry and fruit was the poisonous pleasure of wine;
And the peak of the mountain was apples, the hugest that ever were seen,
And they prest, as they grew, on each other, with hardly a leaflet between,
And all of them redder than rosiest health or than utterest shame,
And setting, when Even descended, the very sunset aflame;
And we stay'd three days, and we gorged and we madden'd, till every one drew
His sword on his fellow to slay him, and ever they struck and they slew;
And myself, I had eaten but sparely, and fought till I sunder'd the fray,
Then I bade them remember my father's death, and we sail'd away.

VII.

And we came to the Isle of Fire: we were lured by the light from afar,
For the peak sent up one league of fire to the Northern Star;

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Lured by the glare and the blare, but scarcely could stand upright,
For the whole isle shudder'd and shook like a man in a mortal affright;
We were giddy besides with the fruits we had gorged, and so crazed that at last
There were some leap'd into the fire; and away we sail'd, and we past
Over that undersea isle, where the water is clearer than air:
Down we look'd: what a garden! O bliss, what a Paradise there!
Towers of a happier time, low down in a rainbow deep
Silent palaces, quiet fields of eternal sleep!
And three of the gentlest and best of my people, whate'er I could say,
Plunged head down in the sea, and the Paradise trembled away.

VIII.

And we came to the Bounteous Isle, where the heavens lean low on the land,
And ever at dawn from the cloud glitter'd o'er us a sunbright hand,
Then it open'd and dropt at the side of each man, as he rose from his rest,
Bread enough for his need till the laborless day dipt under the West;
And we wander'd about it and thro' it. O never was time so good!
And we sang of the triumphs of Finn, and the boast of our ancient blood,
And we gazed at the wandering wave as we sat by the gurgle of springs,
And we chanted the songs of the Bards and the glories of fairy kings;
But at length we began to be weary, to sigh, and to stretch and yawn,
Till we hated the Bounteous Isle and the sunbright hand of the dawn,

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For there was not an enemy near, but the whole green Isle was our own,
And we took to playing at ball, and we took to throwing the stone,
And we took to playing at battle, but that was a perilous play,
For the passion of battle was in us, we slew and we sail'd away.

IX.

And we came to the Isle of Witches and heard their musical cry —
"Come to us, O come, come" in the stormy red of a sky
Dashing the fires and the shadows of dawn on the beautiful shapes,
For a wild witch naked as heaven stood on each of the loftiest capes,
And a hundred ranged on the rock like white sea-birds in a row,
And a hundred gamboll'd and pranced on the wrecks in the sand below,
And a hundred splash'd from the ledges, and bosom'd the burst of the spray,
But I knew we should fall on each other, and hastily sail'd away.

X.

And we came in an evil time to the Isle of the Double Towers:
One was of smooth-cut stone, one carved all over with flowers,
But an earthquake always moved in the hollows under the dells,
And they shock'd on each other and butted each other with clashing of bells,
And the daws flew out of the Towers and jangled and wrangled in vain,
And the clash and boom of the bells ran into the heart and the brain,
Till the passion of battle was on us, and all took sides with the Towers,

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There were some for the clean-cut stone, there were more
for the carven flowers,
And the wrathful thunder of God peal'd over us all the day,
For the one half slew the other, and after we sail'd away.

XI.

And we came to the Isle of a Saint who had sail'd with St.
Brendan of yore,
He had lived ever since on the Isle and his winters were
fifteen-score,
And his voice was low as from other worlds, and his eyes
were sweet,
And his white hair sank to his heels and his white beard
fell to his feet,
And he spake to me, "O Maeldune, let be this purpose of
thine!
Remember the words of the Lord when he told us 'Ven-
geance is mine!'
His fathers have slain thy fathers in war or in single strife,
Thy fathers have slain his fathers, each taken a life for a
life,
Thy father had slain his father, how long shall the murder
last?
Go back to the Isle of Finn and suffer the Past to be Past."
And we kiss'd the fringe of his beard and we pray'd as we
heard him pray,
And the Holy man he assoil'd us, and sadly we sail'd away.

XII.

And we came to the Isle we were blown from, and there
on the shore was he,
The man that had slain my father. I saw him and let him
be.
O weary was I of the travel, the trouble, the strife and the
sin,
When I landed again, with a tithe of my men, on the Isle
of Finn.

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THE SISTERS.

THEY have left the doors ajar; and by their clash
And prelude on the keys, I know the song,
Their favorite — which I call "The Tables Turned."
Evelyn begins it "O diviner Air."

EVELYN.

O diviner Air,
Thro' the heat, the drowth, the dust, the glare,
Far from out the west in shadowing showers,
Over all the meadow baked and bare,
Making fresh and fair
All the bowers and the flowers,
Fainting flowers, faded bowers,
Over all this weary world of ours,
Breathe, diviner Air!

A sweet voice that — you scarce could better that.
Now follows Edith echoing Evelyn.

EDITH.

O diviner Light,
Thro' the cloud that roofs our noon with night,
Thro' the blotting mist, the blinding showers,
Far from out a sky forever bright,
Over all the woodland's flooded bowers,
Over all the meadow's drowning flowers,
Over all this ruin'd world of ours,
Break, diviner Light!

Marvellously like, their voices — and themselves!
Tho' one is somewhat deeper than the other,
As one is somewhat graver than the other —
Edith than Evelyn. Your good Uncle, whom
You count the father of your fortune, longs

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For this alliance: let me ask you then,
Which voice most takes you? for I do not doubt
Being a watchful parent, you are taken,
With one or other: tho' sometimes I fear
You may be flickering, fluttering in a doubt
Between the two — which must not be — which might
Be death to one: they both are beautiful:
Evelyn is gayer, wittier, prettier, says
The common voice, if one may trust it: she?
No! but the paler and the graver, Edith.
Woo her and gain her then: no wavering, boy!
The graver is perhaps the one for you
Who jest and laugh so easily and so well.
For love will go by contrast, as by likes.

No sisters ever prized each other more.
Not so: their mother and her sister loved
More passionately still.
But that my best
And oldest friend, your Uncle, wishes it,
And that I know you worthy every way
To be my son, I might, perchance, be loath
To part them, or part from them: and yet one
Should marry, or all the broad lands in your view
From this bay window — which our house has held
Three hundred years — will pass collaterally.

My father with a child on either knee,
A hand upon the head of either child,
Smoothing their locks, as golden as his own
Were silver, "get them wedded" would he say.
And once my prattling Edith ask'd him "why?"
Ay, why? said he, "for why should I go lame?"
Then told them of his wars, and of his wound.
For see — this wine — the grape from whence it flow'd
Was blackening on the slopes of Portugal,
When that brave soldier, down the terrible ridge
Plunged in the last fierce charge at Waterloo,

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And caught the laming bullet. He left me this,
Which yet retains a memory of its youth,
As I of mine, and my first passion. Come!
Here 's to your happy union with my child!

Yet must you change your name: no fault of mine!
You say that you can do it as willingly
As birds make ready for their bridal-time
By change of feather: for all that, my boy,
Some birds are sick and sullen when they molt.
An old and worthy name! but mine that stirr'd
Among our civil wars and earlier too
Among the Roses, the more venerable.
I care not for a name — no fault of mine.
Once more — a happier marriage than my own!

You see yon Lombard poplar on the plain.
The highway running by it leaves a breadth
Of sward to left and right, where, long ago,
One bright May morning in a world of song,
I lay at leisure, watching overhead
The aerial poplar wave, an amber spire.

I dozed; I woke. An open landaulet
Whirl'd by, which, after it had past me, show'd
Turning my way, the loveliest face on earth.
The face of one there sitting opposite,
On whom I brought a strange unhappiness,
That time I did not see.

Love at first sight
May seem — with goodly rhyme and reason for it —
Possible — at first glimpse, and for a face
Gone in a moment — strange. Yet once, when first
I came on lake Llanberris in the dark,
A moonless night with storm — one lightning-fork
Flash'd out the lake; and tho' I loiter'd there
The full day after, yet in retrospect

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That less than momentary thunder-sketch
Of lake and mountain conquers all the day.

The Sun himself has limn'd the face for me.
Not quite so quickly, no, nor half as well.
For look you here — the shadows are too deep,
And like the critic's blurring comment make
The veriest beauties of the work appear
The darkest faults: the sweet eyes frown: the lips
Seem but a gash. My sole memorial
Of Edith — no, the other, — both indeed.

So that bright face was flash'd thro' sense and soul
And by the poplar vanish'd — to be found
Long after, as it seem'd, beneath the tall
Tree-bowers, and those long-sweeping beechen boughs
Of our New Forest. I was there alone:
The phantom of the whirling landaulet
Forever past me by; when one quick peal
Of laughter drew me thro' the glimmering glades
Down to the snowlike sparkle of a cloth
On fern and foxglove. Lo, the face again,
My Rosalind in this Arden — Edith — all
One bloom of youth, health, beauty, happiness,
And moved to merriment at a passing jest.

There one of those about her knowing me
Call'd me to join them; so with these I spent
What seem'd my crowning hour, my day of days.
I woo'd her then, nor unsuccessfully,
The worse for her, for me! was I content?
Ay — no, not quite; for now and then I thought
Laziness, vague love-longings, the bright May,
Had made a heated haze to magnify
The charm of Edith — that a man's ideal
Is high in heaven, and lodged with Plato's God,
Not findable here — content, and not content,
In some such fashion as a man may be

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That having had the portrait of his friend
Drawn by an artist, looks at it, and says,
"Good! very like! not altogether he."

As yet I had not bound myself by words,
Only, believing I loved Edith, made
Edith love *me*. Then came the day when I,
Flattering myself that all my doubts were fools
Born of the fool this Age that doubts of all —
Not I that day of Edith's love or mine —
Had braced my purpose to declare myself:
I stood upon the stairs of Paradise.
The golden gates would open at a word.
I spoke it — told her of my passion, seen
And lost and found again, had got so far,
Had caught her hand, her eyelids fell — I heard
Wheels, and a noise of welcome at the doors —
On a sudden after two Italian years
Had set the blossom of her health again,
The younger sister, Evelyn, enter'd — there,
There was the face, and altogether she.
The mother fell about the daughter's neck,
The sisters closed in one another's arms,
Their people throng'd about them from the hall,
And in the thick of question and reply
I fled the house, driven by one angel face,
And all the Furies.

I was bound to her;
I could not free myself in honor — bound
Not by the sounded letter of the word,
But counter-pressures of the yielded hand
That timorously and faintly echoed mine,
Quick blushes, the sweet dwelling of her eyes
Upon me when she thought I did not see —
Were these not bonds? nay, nay, but could I wed her
Loving the other? do her that great wrong?
Had I not dream'd I loved her yester morn?
Had I not known where Love, at first a fear,

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Grew after marriage to full height and form?
Yet after marriage, that mock-sister there —
Brother-in-law — the fiery nearness of it —
Unlawful and disloyal brotherhood —
What end but darkness could ensue from this
For all the three? So Love and Honor jarr'd
Tho' Love and Honor join'd to raise the full
High-tide of doubt that sway'd me up and down
Advancing nor retreating.

Edith wrote:
"My mother bids me ask" (I did not tell you —
A widow with less guile than many a child.
God help the wrinkled children that are Christ's
As well as the plump cheek — she wrought us harm,
Poor soul, not knowing) "are you ill?" (so ran
The letter) "you have not been here of late.
You will not find me here. At last I go
On that long-promised visit to the North.
I told your wayside story to my mother
And Evelyn. She remembers you. Farewell.
Pray come and see my mother. Almost blind
With ever-growing cataract, yet she thinks
She sees you when she hears. Again farewell."

Cold words from one I had hoped to warm so far
That I could stamp my image on her heart!
"Pray come and see my mother, and farewell."
Cold, but as welcome as free airs of heaven
After a dungeon's closeness. Selfish, strange!
What dwarfs are men! my strangled vanity
Utter'd a stifled cry — to have vext myself
And all in vain for her — cold heart or none —
No bride for me. Yet so my path was clear
To win the sister.

Whom I woo'd and won.
For Evelyn knew not of my former suit,
Because the simple mother work'd upon
By Edith pray'd me not to whisper of it.
And Edith would be bridesmaid on the day.

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But on that day, not being all at ease,
I from the altar glancing back upon her,
Before the first "I will" was utter'd, saw
The bridesmaid pale, statuelike, passionless —
"No harm, no harm" I turned again, and placed
My ring upon the finger of my bride.

So, when we parted, Edith spoke no word,
She wept no tear, but round my Evelyn clung
In utter silence for so long, I thought
"What, will she never set her sister free?"

We left her, happy each in each, and then,
As tho' the happiness of each in each
Were not enough, must fain have torrents, lakes,
Hills, the great things of Nature and the fair,
To lift us as it were from commonplace,
And help us to our joy. Better have sent
Our Edith thro' the glories of the earth,
To change with her horizon, if true Love
Were not his own imperial all-in-all.
Far off we went. My God, I would not live
Save that I think this gross hard-seeming world
Is our misshaping vision of the Powers
Behind the world, that make our griefs our gains.

For on the dark night of our marriage-day
The great Tragedian, that had quench'd herself
In that assumption of the bridesmaid — she
That loved me — our true Edith — her brain broke
With over-acting, till she rose and fled
Beneath a pitiless rush of Autumn rain
To the deaf church — to be let in — to pray
Before *that* altar — so I think; and there
They found her beating the hard Protestant doors.
She died and she was buried ere we knew.

I learnt it first. I had to speak. At once
The bright quick smile of Evelyn, that had sunn'd

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The morning of our marriage, passed away:
And on our home-return the daily want
Of Edith in the house, the garden, still
Haunted us like her ghost; and by and by,
Either from that necessity for talk
Which lives with blindness, or plain innocence
Of nature, or desire that her lost child
Should earn from both the praise of heroism,
The mother broke her promise to the dead,
And told the living daughter with what love
Edith had welcomed my short wooing of her,
And all her sweet self-sacrifice and death.

Henceforth that mystic bond betwixt the twins —
Did I not tell you they were twins? — prevail'd
So far that no caress could win my wife
Back to that passionate answer of full heart
I had from her at first. Not that her love,
Tho' scarce as great as Edith's power of love,
Had lessen'd, but the mother's garrulous wail
Forever woke the unhappy Past again,
Till that dead bridesmaid, meant to be my bride,
Put forth cold hands between us, and I fear'd
The very fountains of her life were chill'd;
So took her thence, and brought her here, and here
She bore a child, whom reverently we call'd
Edith; and in the second year was born
A second — this I named from her own self,
Evelyn; then two weeks — no more — she joined,
In and beyond the grave, that one she loved.
Now in this quiet of declining life,
Thro' dreams by night and trances of the day,
The sisters glide about me hand in hand,
Both beautiful alike, nor can I tell
One from the other, no, nor care to tell
One from the other, only know they come,
They smile upon me, till, remembering all
The love they both have borne me, and the love

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I bore them both — divided as I am
From either by the stillness of the grave —
I know not which of these I love the best.

But *you* love Edith; and her own true eyes
Are traitors to her; our quick Evelyn —
The merrier, prettier, wittier, as they talk,
And not without good reason, my good son —
Is yet untouch'd: and I that hold them both
Dearest of all things — well, I am not sure —
But if there lie a preference either way,
And in the rich vocabulary of Love
"Most dearest" be a true superlative —
I think *I* likewise love your Edith most.

THE VILLAGE WIFE; OR, THE ENTAIL.[1]

I.

OUSE-KEEPER sent tha my lass, fur new Squire coom'd last night.
Butter an' heggs — yis — yis. I'll goä wi' tha back: all right;
Butter I warrants be prime, an' I warrants the heggs be as well,
Hafe a pint o' milk runs out when ya breäks the shell.

II.

Sit thysen down fur a bit: hev a glass o' cowslip wine!
I like the owd Squire an' 'is gells as thaw they was gells o' mine,
Fur then we was all es one, the Squire an' 'is darters an' me,
Hall but Miss Annie, the heldest, I niver not took to she:
But Nelly, the last of the cletch,[2] I liked 'er the fust on 'em all,

[1] See note to "Northern Cobbler," page 167. [2] A brood of chickens.

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Fur hoffens we talkt o' my darter es died o' the fever at fall:
An' I thowt 'twur the will o' the Lord, but Miss Annie she said it wur draäins,
Fur she hed n't naw coomfut in 'er, an' arn'd naw thanks fur 'er paäins.
Eh! thebbe all wi' the Lord my childer, I han't gotten none!
Sa new Squire 's coom'd wi' 'is taäil in 'is 'and, 'an owd Squire 's gone.

III.

Fur 'staäte be i' taäil, my lass: tha dosn' knaw what that be?
But I knaws the law, I does, for the lawyer ha towd it me.
"When theer's naw 'eäd to a 'Ouse by the fault o' that ere maäle —
The gells they counts fur nowt, and the next un he taäkes the taäil."

IV.

What be the next un like? can tha tell ony harm on 'im lass? —
Naäy sit down — naw 'urry — sa cowd! — hev another glass!
Straänge an' cowd fur the time! we may happen a fall o' snaw —
Not es I cares fur to hear ony harm, but I likes to knaw.
An' I 'oäps es 'e beänt booöklarn'd: but 'e dosn' not coom fro' the shere;
We 'd anew o' that wi' the Squire, an we haätes booöklarnin' ere.

V.

Fur Squire wur a Varsity scholard, an niver lookt arter the land —
Whoäts or turmuts or taätes — 'e 'd hallus a booök i' 'is 'and,
Hallus aloän wi' 'is booöks, thaw nigh upo' seventy year.
An' booöks, what 's booöks? thou knaws thebbe neyther 'ere nor theer.

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VI.

An' the gells, they hed n't naw taäils, an' the lawyer he towd it me
That 'is taäil were soä tied up es he could n't cut down a tree!
"Drat the trees," says I, to be sewer I haätes 'em, my lass,
Fur we puts the muck o' the land, an' they sucks the muck fro' the grass.

VII.

An' Squire wur hallus a-smilin', an' gied to the tramps goin by —
An' all o' the wust i' the parish — wi' hoffens a drop in 'is eye.
An' ivry darter o' Squire's hed her awn ridin-erse to 'ersen,
An' they rampaged about wi' their grooms, an' wus 'untin' arter the men,
An' hallus a-dallackt[1] an' dizen'd out, an' a-buyin' new cloäthes,
While 'e sit like a graät glimmer-gowk[2] wi' 'is glasses athurt 'is noäse,
An' 'is noäse sa grufted wi' snuff as it could n't be scroob'd awaäy,
Fur 'atween is reädin' an' writin' 'e snifft up a box in a daäy,
An' 'e niver runn'd arter the fox, nor arter the birds wi' 'is gun,
An' 'e niver not shot one 'are, but 'e leäved it to Charlie 'is son,
An' 'e niver not fish'd 'is awn ponds, but Charlie 'e cotch'd the pike,
Fur 'e warn't not burn to the land, an' 'e did n't take kind to it like;
But I eärs es 'e'd gie fur a howry[3] owd book thutty pound an' moor,
An' 'e'd wrote an owd book, his awn sen, sa I knaw'd es 'e'd coom to be poor;
An' 'e gied — I be fear'd fur to tell tha 'ow much — fur an owd scratted stoän,

[1] Overdrest in gay colors. [2] Owl. [3] Filthy.

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An' 'e digg'd up a loomp i' the land an' 'e got a brown pot an' a boän,
An' 'e bowt owd money, es would n't goä, wi' good gowd o' the Queen,
An' 'e bowt little statutes all-naäkt an' which was a shaäme to be seen;
But 'e niver looökt ower a bill, nor 'e niver not seed to owt,
An' 'e niver knawd nowt but booöks, an' booöks, as thou knaws, beänt nowt.

VIII.

But owd Squire's laädy es long es she lived she kep' 'em all clear,
Thaw es long es she lived I niver hed none of 'er darters 'ere;
But arter she died we was all es one, the childer an' me,
An' sarvints runn'd in an' out, an' offens we hed 'em to tea.
Lawk! 'ow I laugh'd when the lasses 'ud talk o' their Missis's waäys,
An' the Missisis talk'd o' the lasses. — I 'll tell tha some o' these daäys.
Hoänly Miss Annie were saw stuck oop, like 'er mother afoor —
'Er an' 'er blessed darter — they niver derken'd my door.

IX.

An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled till 'e'd gotten a fright at last,
An' 'e calls fur 'is son, fur the 'turney's letters they foller'd sa fast;
But Squire wur afear'd o' 'is son, an' 'e says to 'im, meek as a mouse,
"Lad, thou mun cut off thy taäil, or the gells 'ull goä to the 'Ouse,
Fur I finds es I be that i' debt, es I 'oäps es thou'll 'elp me a bit,
An' if thou 'll 'gree to cut off thy taäil I may saäve mysen yit."

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X.

But Charlie 'e sets back 'is ears, an' e sweärs, an' 'e says to 'im "Noa."
"I've gotten the 'staäte by the taäil an' be dang'd if I iver let goa!
Coom! coom! feyther," 'e says, "why should n't thy booöks be sowd?
I hears es soom o' thy booöks mebbe worth their weight i' gowd."

XI.

Heäps an' heäps o' booöks, I ha' see'd 'em, belonged to the Squire,
But the lasses 'ed teärd out leaves i' the middle to kindle the fire;
Sa moäst on 'is owd big booöks fetch'd nigh to nowt at the saäle,
And Squire were at Charlie ageän to git 'im to cut off 'is taäil.

XII.

Ya would n't find Charlie's likes — 'e were that outdacious at 'oäm,
Not thaw ya went fur to raäke out Hell wi' a small-tooth coämb —
Droonk wi' the Quoloty's wine, an' droonk wi' the farmer's aäle,
Mad wi' the lasses an' all — an' 'e would n't cut off the taäil.

XIII.

Thou 's coom'd oop by the beck; and a thurn be a-grawin' theer,
I niver ha seed it sa white wi' the Maäy es I see'd it to-year —
Theerabouts Charlie joompt — and it gied me a scare tother night,
Fur I thowt it wur Charlie's ghoäst i' the derk, fur it looökt sa white.
'Billy," says 'e, "hev a joomp!" — thaw the banks o' the beck be sa high,

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Fur he ca'd 'is 'erse Billy-rough-un, thaw niver a hair wur awry;
But Billy fell bakkuds o' Charlie, an' Charlie 'e brok 'is neck,
So theer wur a hend o' the taäil, fur 'e lost 'is taäil i' the beck.

XIV.

Sa 'is taäil wur lost an' 'is booöks wur gone an' 'is boy wur deäd,
An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled, but 'e niver not lift oor 'is eäd:
Hallus a soft un Squire! an' 'e smiled, fur 'e hed n't nay friend,
Sa feyther an' son was buried togither, an' this wur the hend.

XV.

An' Parson as hes n't the call, nor the mooney, but hes the pride,
'E reäds of a sewer an' sartan 'oäp o' the tother side;
But I beänt that sewer es the Lord, howsiver they praäy'd an praäy'd,
Lets them inter 'eaven eäsy es leäves their debts to be paäid.
Siver the mou'ds rattled down upo' poor owd Squire i' the wood,
An' I cried along wi' the gells, fur they weänt niver coom to naw good.

XVI.

Fur Molly the youngest she walkt awaäy wi' a hofficer lad,
An' nawbody 'eärd on 'er sin, sa o' coorse she be gone to the bad!
An' Lucy wur laäme o' one leg, sweet-'arts she never 'ed none —
Straänge an' unheppen[1] Miss Lucy! we naämed her "Dot an' gaw one!"
An' Hetty wur weak i' the hattics, wi'out ony harm i' the legs,

[1] Ungainly, awkward

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An' the fever 'ed baäked Jinny's 'eäd as bald as one o' them heggs,
An' Nelly wur up fro' the craädle as big i' the mouth as a cow,
An' saw she mun hammergrate,[1] lass, or she weänt git a maäte onyhow!
An' es fur Miss Annie es call'd me afoor my awn foälks to my faäce
"A hignorant village wife as 'ud hev to be larn'd her awn plaäce,"
Hes fur Miss Hannie the heldest hes now be a-grawin' sa howd,
I knaws that mooch o' sheä, es it beänt not fit to be towd!

XVII.

Sa I did n't not taäke it kindly ov owd Miss Annie to saäy
Es I should be talkin' ageän' em, es soon es they went waäy,
Fur, lawks! 'ow I cried when they went, an' our Nelly she gied me 'er 'and,
Fur I 'd ha done owt fur the Squire an' 'is gells es belong'd to the land;
Booöks, es I said afoor, thebbe neyther 'ere nor theer!
But I sarved 'em wi' butter an' heggs fur huppuds o' twenty year.

XVIII.

An' they hallus paäid what I hax'd, sa I hallus deel'd wi' the Hall,
An' they knaw'd what butter wur, an' they knaw'd what a hegg wur an' all;
Hugger-mugger they lived, but they was n't that eäsy to pleäse,
Till I gied 'em Hinjian curn, an' they laäid big heggs es tha seeas;
An' I niver puts saäme[2] i' *my* butter, they does it at Willis' farm,
Taäste another drop o' the wine — tweänt do tha naw harm.

[1] Emigrate. [2] Lard.

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XIX.

Sa new Squire 's coom'd wi' 'is taäil in 'is 'and, an' owd Squire 's gone;
I heard 'im a roomlin' by, but arter my nightcap wur on;
Sa I han't clapt eyes on 'im yit, fur he coom'd last night sa laäte —
Pluksh!!![1] the hens i' the peäs! why didn't tha hesp the gaäte?

DE PROFUNDIS.

THE TWO GREETINGS.

I.

OUT of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
Where all that was to be, in all that was,
Whirl'd for a million æons thro' the vast
Waste dawn of multitudinous-eddying light —
Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
Thro' all this changing world of changeless law,
And every phase of ever-heightening life,
And nine long months of antenatal gloom,
With this last moon, this crescent — her dark orb
Touch'd with earth's light — thou comest, darling boy;
Our own; a babe in lineament and limb
Perfect, and prophet of the perfect man;
Whose face and form are hers and mine in one,
Indissolubly married like our love;
Live and be happy in thyself, and serve
This mortal race thy kin so well, that men
May bless thee as we bless thee, O young life
Breaking with laughter from the dark; and may

[1] A cry accompanied by a clapping of hands to scare trespassing fowl.

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The fated channel where thy motion lives
Be prosperously shaped, and sway thy course
Along the years of haste and random youth
Unshatter'd, then full-current thro' full man:
And last in kindly curves, with gentlest fall,
By quiet fields, a slowly-dying power,
To that last deep where we and thou art still.

II.

I.

Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
From that great deep, before our world begins,
Whereon the Spirit of God moves as he will —
Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
From that true world within the world we see,
Whereof our world is but the bounding shore —
Out of the deep, Spirit, out of the deep,
With this ninth moon, that sends the hidden sun
Down yon dark sea, thou comest, darling boy.

II.

For in the world which is not ours, They said
"Let us make man" and that which should be man,
From that one light no man can look upon,
Drew to this shore lit by the suns and moons
And all the shadows. O dear Spirit half-lost
In thine own shadow and this fleshly sign
That thou art thou — who wailest being born
And banish'd into mystery, and the pain
Of this divisible-indivisible world
Among the numerable-innumerable
Sun, sun, and sun, thro' finite-infinite space
In finite-infinite Time — our mortal veil
And shatter'd phantom of that infinite One,
Who made thee unconceivably Thyself
Out of His whole World-self and all in all —

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Live thou! and of the grain and husk, the grape
And ivyberry, choose; and still depart
From death to death thro' life and life, and find
Nearer and ever nearer Him, who wrought
Not Matter, nor the finite-infinite,
But this main miracle, that thou art thou,
With power on thine own act and on the world.

THE HUMAN CRY.

I.

HALLOWÈD be Thy name — Hallelujah!
Infinite Ideality!.
Immeasurable Reality!
Infinite Personality!
Hallowèd be Thy name — Halleluiah!

II.

We feel we are nothing — for all is Thou and in Thee;
We feel we are something — *that* also has come from Thee;
We know we are nothing — but Thou wilt help us to be.
Hallowèd be Thy name — Halleluiah!

THE NEW TIMON AND THE POETS.†

WE know him, out of Shakespeare's art,
And those fine curses which he spoke;
The old Timon, with his noble heart,
That, strongly loathing, greatly broke.

So died the Old: here comes the New.
Regard him: a familiar face:
I thought we knew him: What, it 's you,
The padded man — that wears the stays —

† Published in Punch, February, 1846, signed "Alcibiades."

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Who killed the girls and thrilled the boys
With dandy pathos when you wrote!
A Lion, you, that made a noise,
And shook a mane *en papillotes*.

And once you tried the Muses too;
You failed, Sir: therefore now you turn,
To fall on those who are to you
As Captain is to Subaltern.

But men of long-enduring hopes,
And careless what this hour may bring,
Can pardon little would-be POPES
And BRUMMELS, when they try to sting.

An Artist, Sir, should rest in Art,
And waive a little of his claim;
To have the deep Poetic heart
Is more than all poetic fame.

But you, Sir, you are hard to please;
You never look but half content;
Nor like a gentleman at ease,
With moral breadth of temperament.

And what with spites and what with fears,
You cannot let a body be:
It 's always ringing in your ears,
"They call this man as good as *me*."

What profits now to understand
The merits of a spotless shirt —
A dapper boot — a little hand —
If half the little soul is dirt?

You talk of tinsel! why, we see
The old mark of rouge upon your cheeks.
You prate of Nature! you are he
That spilt his life about the cliques.

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A TIMON you! Nay, nay, for shame:
It looks too arrogant a jest —
The fierce old man — to take his name,
You bandbox. Off, and let him rest.

STANZAS.*

WHAT time I wasted youthful hours,
One of the shining wingèd powers,
Show'd me vast cliffs with crown of towers.

As towards the gracious light I bow'd,
They seem'd high palaces and proud,
Hid now and then with sliding cloud.

He said, "The labor is not small;
Yet winds the pathway free to all; —
Take care thou dost not fear to fall!"

SONNET.

TO WILLIAM CHARLES MACREADY.†

FAREWELL, Macready, since to-night we part.
Full-handed thunders often have confest
Thy power, well-used to move the public breast.
We thank thee with one voice, and from the heart.
Farewell, Macready; since this night we part.
Go, take thine honors home: rank with the best,
Garrick, and statelier Kemble, and the rest
Who made a nation purer thro' their art.

* The Keepsake, 1851.

† Read by Mr. John Forster at a dinner given to Mr. Macready, March 1, 1851, on his retirement from the stage.

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Thine is it, that our Drama did not die,
Nor flicker down to brainless pantomime,
And those gilt gauds men-children swarm to see.
Farewell, Macready; moral, grave, sublime.
Our Shakespeare's bland and universal eye
Dwells pleased, thro' twice a hundred years, on thee.

*BRITONS, GUARD YOUR OWN.**

RISE, Britons, rise, if manhood be not dead;
The world's last tempest darkens overhead;
The Pope has bless'd him;
The Church caress'd him;
He triumphs; maybe we shall stand alone.
Britons, guard your own.

His ruthless host is bought with plunder'd gold,
By lying priests the peasants' votes controll'd.
All freedom vanish'd,
The true men banish'd,
He triumphs; maybe we shall stand alone.
Britons, guard your own.

Peace-lovers we — sweet Peace we all desire —
Peace-lovers we — but who can trust a liar?
Peace-lovers, haters
Of shameless traitors,
We hate not France, but this man's heart of stone,
Briton's, guard your own.

We hate not France, but France has lost her voice.
This man is France, the man they call her choice.
By tricks and spying,
By craft and lying,
And murder was her freedom overthrown.
Britons, guard your own.

* The Examiner, 1852.

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"Vive l'Empereur" may follow by and by;
"God save the Queen" is here a truer cry.
God save the Nation,
The toleration,
And the free speech that makes a Briton known.
Britons, guard your own.

Rome's dearest daughter now is captive France,
The Jesuit laughs, and reckoning on his chance,
Would unrelenting,
Kill all dissenting,
Till we were left to fight for truth alone.
Britons, guard your own.

Call home your ships across Biscayan tides,
To blow the battle from their oaken sides.
Why waste they yonder
Their idle thunder?
Why stay they there to guard a foreign throne?
Seamen, guard your own.

We were the best of marksmen long ago,
We won old battles with our strength, the bow.
Now practice, yeomen,
Like those bowmen,
Till your balls fly as their shafts have flown.
Yeomen, guard your own.

His soldier-ridden Highness might incline
To take Sardinia, Belgium, or the Rhine;
Shall we stand idle,
Nor seek to bridle
His rude aggressions, till we stand alone?
Make their cause your own.

Should he land here, and for one hour prevail,
There must no man go back to bear the tale:

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No man to bear it—
Swear it! we swear it!
Although we fight the banded world alone,
We swear to guard our own.

*HANDS ALL ROUND.**

FIRST drink a health, this solemn night,
A health to England, every guest;
That man's the best cosmopolite
Who loves his native country best,
May freedom's oak forever live
With stronger life from day to day;
That man's the best Conservative
Who lops the mouldered branch away.
Hands all round!
God the tyrant's hope confound!
To this great cause of Freedom drink, my friends,
And the great name of England, round and round

A health to Europe's honest men!
Heaven guard them from her tyrants' jails!
From wronged Poerio's noisome den,
From iron limbs and tortured nails!
We curse the crimes of southern kings,
The Russian whips and Austrian rods—
We likewise have our evil things;
Too much we make our Ledgers, Gods.
Yet hands all round!
God the tyrant's cause confound!
To Europe's better health we drink, my friends.
And the great name of England, round and round!

What health to France, if France be she.
Whom martial progress only charms?

* The Examiner, 1852, and signed "Merlin."

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Yet tell her — better to be free
Than vanquish all the world in arms.
Her frantic city's flashing heats
But fire, to blast, the hopes of men.
Why change the titles of your streets?
You fools, you 'll want them all again.
Hands all round!
God the tyrant's cause confound!
To France, the wiser France, we drink, my friends,
And the great name of England, round and round.

Gigantic daughter of the West,
We drink to thee across the flood,
We know thee and we love thee best,
For art thou not of British blood?
Should war's mad blast again be blown,
Permit not thou the tyrant powers
To fight thy mother here alone,
But let thy broadsides roar with ours.
Hands all round!
God the tyrant's cause confound!
To our dear kinsmen of the West, my friends,
And the great name of England, round and round.

O rise, our strong Atlantic sons,
When war against our freedom springs!
O speak to Europe through your guns!
They *can* be understood by kings.
Your must not mix our Queen with those
That wish to keep their people fools;
Our freedom's foemen are her foes,
She comprehends the race she rules.
Hands all round!
God the tyrant's cause confound!
To our dear kinsmen in the West, my friends,
And the great name of England, round and round.

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HANDS ALL ROUND! *

FIRST pledge our Queen, this solemn night,
Then drink to England, every guest;
That man 's the best Cosmopolite
Who loves his native country best.
May freedom's oak forever live
With stronger life from day to day!
That man 's the best Conservative
Who lops the moulder'd branch away.
Hands all round!
God the traitor's hope confound!
To this great cause of Freedom drink, my friends,
And the great name of England, round and round.

To all the loyal hearts who long
To keep our English Empire whole!
To all our noble sons, the strong
New England of the Southern Pole!
To England under Indian skies,
To those dark millions of her realm!
To Canada whom we love and prize,
Whatever statesman holds the helm!
Hands all round!
God the traitor's hope confound!
To this great name of England drink, my friends,
And all her glorious Empire, round and round.

To all our statesmen so they be
True leaders of the land's desire!
To both our Houses, may they see
Beyond the borough and the shire!
We sail'd wherever ship could sail,

* Second form of same poem; published with the author's name after the Queen's escape from assassination, 1882.

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We founded many a mighty state,
Pray God our greatness may not fail
Through craven fears of being great.
Hands all round!
God the traitor's hope confound!
To this great cause of Freedom drink, my friends,
And the great name of England, round and round.

TO VIRGIL.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF THE MANTUANS FOR THE NINETEENTH CENTENARY OF VIRGIL'S DEATH.

I.

ROMAN VIRGIL, thou that singest
Ilion's lofty temples robed in fire,
Ilion falling, Rome arising,
wars, and filial faith, and Dido's pyre;

II.

Landscape lover, lord of language,
more than he that sang the Works and Days,
All the chosen coin of fancy
flashing out from many a golden phrase;

III.

Thou that singest wheat and woodland,
tilth and vineyard, hive and horse and herd;
All the charm of all the Muses
often flowering in a lonely word;

IV.

Poet of the happy Tityrus
piping underneath his beechen bowers;
Poet of the poet-satyr
whom the laughing shepherd bound with flowers;

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V.

Chanter of the Pollio, glorying
in the blissful years again to be,
Summers of the snakeless meadow,
unlaborious earth and oarless sea;

VI.

Thou that seest Universal
Nature moved by Universal Mind;
Thou majestic in thy sadness
at the doubtful doom of human kind;

VII.

Light among the vanished ages;
star that gildest yet this phantom shore;
Golden branch amid the shadows,
kings and realms that pass to rise no more;

VIII.

Now thy Forum roars no longer,
fallen every purple Cæsar's dome—
Tho' thine ocean-roll of rhythm
sound forever of Imperial Rome—

IX.

Now the Rome of slaves has perish'd,
and the Rome of freemen holds her place,
I, from out the Northern Island,
sunder'd once from all the human race,

X.

I salute thee, Mantovano,
I that loved thee since my day began,
Wielder of the stateliest measure
ever moulded by the lips of man.

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PREFATORY SONNET.

TO THE "NINETEENTH CENTURY."

THOSE that of late had fleeted far and fast
To touch all shores, now leaving to the skill
Of others their old craft seaworthy still,
Have chartered this; where, mindful of the past
Our true co-mates regather round the mast;
Of diverse tongue, but with a common will
Here, in this roaring moon of daffodil
And crocus, to put forth and brave the blast;
For some, descending from the sacred peak
Of hoar high-templed Faith, have leagued again
Their lot with ours to rove the world about;
And some are wilder comrades, sworn to seek
If any golden harbor be for men
In seas of Death and sunless gulfs of Doubt.

TO THE REV. W. H. BROOKFIELD.

BROOKS, for they call'd you so that knew you best,
Old Brooks, who loved so well to mouth my rhymes,
How oft we two have heard St. Mary's chimes!
How oft the Cantab supper, host and guest,
Would echo helpless laughter to your jest!
How oft with him we paced that walk of limes,
Him, the lost light of those dawn-golden times,
Who loved you well! Now both are gone to rest
Yon man of humorous-melancholy mark,
Dead of some inward agony — is it so?
Our kindlier, trustier Jaques, past away!
I cannot laud this life, it looks so dark:
Σκιᾶς ὄναρ — dream of a shadow, go —
God bless you. I shall join you in a day.

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MONTENEGRO.

THEY rose to where their sovran eagle sails,
They kept their faith, their freedom, on the height,
Chaste, frugal, savage, arm'd by day and night
Against the Turk; whose inroad nowhere scales
Their headlong passes, but his footstep fails,
And red with blood the Crescent reels from fight
Before their dauntless hundreds, in prone flight
By thousands down the crags and thro' the vales.
O smallest among peoples! rough rock-throne
Of Freedom! warriors beating back the swarm
Of Turkish Islam for five hundred years,
Great Tsernogora! never since thine own
Black ridges drew the cloud and brake the storm
Has breathed a race of mightier mountaineers.

TO VICTOR HUGO.

VICTOR in Drama, Victor in Romance,
Cloud-weaver of phantasmal hopes and fears,
French of the French, and Lord of human tears;
Child-lover; Bard whose fame-lit laurels glance
Darkening the wreaths of all that would advance,
Beyond our strait, their claim to be thy peers;
Weird Titan by thy winter weight of years
As yet unbroken, Stormy voice of France!
Who dost not love our England — so they say;
I know not — England, France, all man to be
Will make one people ere man's race be run:
And I, desiring that diviner day,
Yield thee full thanks for thy full courtesy
To younger England in the boy my son.

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TRANSLATIONS.

I.

BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH.

Constantinus, King of the Scots, after having sworn allegiance to Athelstan, allied himself with the Danes of Ireland under Anlaf, and invading England, was defeated by Athelstan and his brother Edmund with great slaughter at Brunanburh in the year 937.

I.

ATHELSTAN[1] King,
Lord among Earls,
Bracelet-bestower and
Baron of Barons,
He with his brother,
Edmund Atheling,
Gaining a lifelong
Glory in battle,
Slew with the sword-edge
There by Brunanburh,
Brake the shield-wall,
Hew'd the linden-wood,[2]
Hack'd the battle-shield,
Sons of Edward with hammer'd brands.

II.

Theirs was a greatness
Got from their Grandsires —
Theirs that so often in
Strife with their enemies
Wrack for their hoards and their hearths and their homes.

[1] I have more or less availed myself of my son's prose translation of this poem in the *Contemporary Review* (November, 1876).

[2] Shields of linden-wood.

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III.

Bow'd the spoiler,
Bent the Scotsman,
Fell the ship-crews
Doom'd to the death.
All the field with blood of the fighters
Flow'd, from when first the great
Sun-star of morning-tide,
Lamp of the Lord God
Lord everlasting,
Glode over earth till the glorious creature
Sunk to his setting.

IV.

There lay many a man
Marr'd by the javelin,
Men of the Northland
Shot over shield.
There was the Scotsman
Weary of war.

V.

We the West-Saxons,
Long as the daylight
Lasted, in companies
Troubled the track of the host that we hated,
Grimly with swords that were sharp from the grindstone
Fiercely we hack'd at the flyers before us.

VI.

Mighty the Mercian,
Hard was his hand-play,
Sparing not any of
Those that with Anlaf,
Warriors over the
Weltering waters
Borne in the bark's-bosom,
Drew to this island,
Doom'd to the death.

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VII.

Five young kings put asleep by the sword-stroke,
Seven strong Earls of the army of Anlaf
Fell on the war-field, numberless numbers,
Shipmen and Scotsmen.

VIII.

Then the Norse leader,
Dire was his need of it,
Few were his following,
Fled to his war-ship:
Fleeted his vessel to sea with the king in it,
Saving his life on the fallow flood.

IX.

Also the crafty one,
Constantinus,
Crept to his North again,
Hoar-headed hero!

X.

Slender reason had
He to be proud of
The welcome of war-knives —
He that was reft of his
Folk and his friends that had
Fallen in conflict,
Leaving his son too
Lost in the carnage,
Mangled to morsels,
A youngster in war!

XI.

Slender reason had
He to be glad of
The clash of the war-glaive —
Traitor and trickster
And spurner of treaties —

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He nor had Anlaf
With armies so broken
A reason for bragging
That they had the better
In perils of battle
On places of slaughter —
The struggle of standards,
The rush of the javelins,
The crash of the charges,[1]
The wielding of weapons —
The play that they play'd with
The children of Edward.

XII.

Then with their nail'd prows
Parted the Norsemen, a
Blood-redden'd relic of
Javelins over
The jarring breaker, the deep-sea billow,
Shaping their way toward Dyflen[2] again,
Shamed in their souls.

XIII.

Also the brethren,
King and Atheling,
Each in his glory,
Went to his own in his own West-Saxonland,
Glad of the war.

XIV.

Many a carcass they left to be carrion,
Many a livid one, many a sallow-skin —
Left for the white-tail'd eagle to tear it, and
Left for the horny-nibb'd raven to rend it, and
Gave to the garbaging war-hawk to gorge it, and
That gray beast, the wolf of the weald.

[1] Lit. "the gathering of men." [2] Dublin.

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XV.

Never had huger
Slaughter of heroes
Slain by the sword-edge —
Such as old writers
Have writ of in histories —
Hapt in this isle, since
Up from the East hither
Saxon and Angle from
Over the broad billow
Broke into Britain with
Haughty war-workers who
Harried the Welshman, when
Earls that were lured by the
Hunger of glory gat
Hold of the land.

II.

ACHILLES OVER THE TRENCH.

ILIAD, xviii. 202.

SO saying, light-foot Iris pass'd away.
Then rose Achilles dear to Zeus; and round
The warrior's puissant shoulders Pallas flung
Her fringed ægis, and around his head
The glorious goddess wreath'd a golden cloud,
And from it lighted an all-shining flame.
As when a smoke from a city goes to heaven
Far off from out an island girt by foes,
All day the men contend in grievous war
From their own city, but with set of sun
Their fires flame thickly, and aloft the glare
Flies streaming, if perchance the neighbors round
May see, and sail to help them in the war;
So from his head the splendor went to heaven.
From wall to dike he stept, he stood, nor join'd
The Achæans — honoring his wise mother's word —

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There standing, shouted, and Pallas far away
Call'd; and a boundless panic shook the foe.
For like the clear voice when a trumpet shrills,
Blown by the fierce beleaguerers of a town,
So rang the clear voice of Æakidês;
And when the brazen cry of Æakidês
Was heard among the Trojans, all their hearts
Were troubled, and the full-maned horses whirl'd
The chariots backward, knowing griefs at hand;
And sheer-astounded were the charioteers
To see the dread, unweariable fire
That always o'er the great Peleion's head
Burn'd, for the bright-eyed goddess made it burn.
Thrice from the dike he sent his mighty shout,
Thrice backward reel'd the Trojans and allies;
And there and then twelve of their noblest died
Among their spears and chariots.

TO THE PRINCESS FREDERICA ON HER MARRIAGE.

O YOU that were eyes and light to the King till he past away
From the darkness of life —
He saw not his daughter — he blest her: the blind King sees you to-day,
He blesses the wife.

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

ON THE CENOTAPH IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

NOT here! the white North has thy bones; and thou,
Heroic sailor-soul,
Art passing on thine happier voyage now
Toward no earthly pole.

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TO DANTE.

(WRITTEN AT REQUEST OF THE FLORENTINES.)

KING, that hast reign'd six hundred years, and grown
In power, and ever growest, since thine own
Fair Florence honoring thy nativity,
Thy Florence now the crown of Italy,
Hath sought the tribute of a verse from me,
I, wearing but the garland of a day,
Cast at thy feet one flower that fades away.

NO MORE.*

O SAD *No More!* O sweet *No More!*
O strange *No More!*
By a mossed brookbank on a stone
I smelt a wildweed flower alone;
There was a ringing in my ears,
And both my eyes gushed out with tears.
Surely all pleasant things had gone before,
Low-buried fathom deep beneath with thee, NO MORE!

ANACREONTICS.*

WITH roses musky-breathed
And drooping daffodilly,
And silver-leaved lily,
And ivy darkly-wreathed,
I wove a crown before her,
For her I love so dearly,

* From the Gem, a literary annual, for 1831.

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A garland for Lenora.
With a silken cord I bound it.
Lenora, laughing clearly
A light and thrilling laughter,
About her forehead wound it,
And loved me ever after.

*A FRAGMENT.**

WHERE is the Giant of the Sun, which stood
In the midnoon the glory of old Rhodes,
A perfect Idol with profulgent brows
Far-sheening down the purple seas to those
Who sailed from Mizraim underneath the star
Named of the Dragon — and between whose limbs
Of brassy vastness broad-blown Argosies
Drave into haven? Yet endure unscathed
Of changeful cycles the great Pyramids
Broad-based amid the fleeting sands, and sloped
Into the slumberous summer noon; but where,
Mysterious Egypt, are thine obelisks
Graven with gorgeous emblems undiscerned?
Thy placid Sphinxes brooding o'er the Nile?
Thy shadowing Idols in the solitudes,
Awful Memnonian countenances calm
Looking athwart the burning flats, far off
Seen by the high-necked camel on the verge
Journeying southward? Where are thy monuments
Piled by the strong and sunborn Anakim
Over their crowned brethren ON and OPH?
Thy Memnon when his peaceful lips are kist
With earliest rays, that from his mother's eyes
Flow over the Arabian bay, no more
Breathes low into the charmed ears of morn
Clear melody flattering the crisped Nile

* From the Gem, a literary annual, for 1861.

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By columned Thebes. Old Memphis hath gone down:
The Pharaohs are no more: somewhere in death
They sleep with staring eyes and gilded lips,
Wrapped round with spiced cerements in old grots
Rock-hewn and sealed for ever.

SONNET.*

ME my own fate to lasting sorrow doometh:
Thy woes are birds of passage, transitory:
Thy spirit, circled with a living glory,
In summer still a summer joy resumeth.
Alone my hopeless melancholy gloometh,
Like a lone cypress, through the twilight hoary,
From an old garden where no flower bloometh,
One cypress on an island promontory.
But yet my lonely spirit follows thine,
As round the rolling earth night follows day:
But yet thy lights on my horizon shine
Into my night, when thou art far away.
I am so dark, alas! and thou so bright,
When we two meet there's never perfect light.

SONNET.*

CHECK every outflash, every ruder sally
Of thought and speech; speak low and give up wholly
Thy spirit to mild-minded melancholy;
This is the place. Through yonder poplar valley
Below the blue-green river windeth slowly;
But in the middle of the sombre valley
The crispèd waters whisper musically,
And all the haunted place is dark and holy.

* Friendship's Offering, 1833

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The nightingale, with long and low preamble,
Warbled from yonder knoll of solemn larches,
And in and out the woodbine's flowery arches
The summer midges wove their wanton gambol,
And all the white-stemmed pinewood slept above —
When in this valley first I told my love.

EARLY SPRING.

I.

ONCE more the Heavenly Power
Makes all things new,
And domes the red-plough'd hills
With loving blue;
The blackbirds have their wills,
The throstles too.

II.

Opens a door in Heaven;
From skies of glass
A Jacob's-ladder falls
On greening grass,
And o'er the mountain-walls
Young angels pass.

III.

Before them fleets the shower,
And burst the buds,
And shine the level lands,
And flash the floods;
The stars are from their hands
Flung thro' the woods;

IV.

The woods by living airs
How freshly fann'd,
Light airs from where the deep,
All down the sand,

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Is breathing in his sleep,
Heard by the land!

v.

O follow, leaping blood,
The season's lure!
O heart, look down and up,
Serene, secure,
Warm as the crocus-cup,
Like snow-drops, pure!

VI.

Past, Future glimpse and fade
Thro' some slight spell,
Some gleam from yonder vale,
Some far blue fell,
And sympathies, how frail,
In sound and smell.

VII.

Till at thy chuckled note,
Thou twinkling bird,
The fairy fancies range,
And, lightly stirred,
Ring little bells of change
From word to word.

VIII.

For now the Heavenly Power
Makes all things new,
And thaws the cold. and fills
The flower with dew;
The blackbirds have their wills,
The poets too.

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"FRATER AVE ATQUE VALE."

ROW us out from Desenzano, to your Sirmione row!
So they row'd, and there we landed — "O venusta Sirmio!"
There to me thro' all the groves of olive in the summer glow,
There beneath the Roman ruin where the purple flowers grow,
Came that "Ave atque Vale" of the Poet's hopeless woe,
Tenderest of Roman poets nineteen hundred years ago.
"Frater Ave atque Vale" — as we wander'd to and fro
Gazing at the Lydian laughter of the Garda-lake below
Sweet Catullus's all-but-island, olive-silvery Sirmio!

DESPAIR.

A DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE.

A man and his wife having lost faith in a God, and hope of a life to come, and being utterly miserable in this, resolve to end themselves by drowning. The woman is drowned, but the man is rescued by a minister of the sect he had abandoned.

I.

IS it you, that preach'd in the chapel there looking over the sand?
Follow'd us too that night, and dogg'd us, and drew me to land?

II.

What did I feel that night? You are curious. How should I tell?
Does it matter so much what I felt? You rescued me — yet — was it well
That you came unwish'd for, uncall'd, between me and the deep and my doom
Three days since, three more dark days of the Godless gloom

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Of a life without sun, without health, without hope, without any delight
In anything here upon earth? but ah God, that night, that night
When the rolling eyes of the light-house there on the fatal neck
Of land running out into rock — they had saved many hundreds from wreck —
Glared on our way toward death, I remember, I thought, as we past,
Does it matter how many they saved? we are all of us wreck'd at last —
"Do you fear?" and there came thro' the roar of the breaker a whisper, a breath, —
"Fear? am I not with you? I am frighted at life, not death."

III.

And the suns of the limitless Universe sparkled and shone in the sky,
Flashing with fires as of God, but we knew that their light was a lie —
Bright as with deathless hope — but, however they sparkled and shone,
The dark little worlds running round them were worlds of woe like our own —
No soul in the heaven above, no soul on the earth below,
A fiery scroll written over with lamentation and woe.

IV.

See, we were nursed in the dark night-fold of your fatalist creed,
And we turn'd to the growing dawn, we had hoped for a dawn indeed,
When the light of a Sun that was coming would scatter the ghosts of the Past,
And the cramping creeds that had madden'd the peoples would vanish at last,

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And we broke away from the Christ, our human brother and friend,
For He spoke, or it seem'd that He spoke, of a Hell without help, without end.

V.

Hoped for a dawn and it came, but the promise had faded away;
We had past from a cheerless night to the glare of a drearier day;
He is only a cloud and a smoke who was once a pillar of fire,
The guess of a worm in the dust and the shadow of its desire —
Of a worm as it writhes in a world of the weak trodden down by the strong,
Of a dying worm in a world, all massacre, murder, and wrong.

VI.

O we poor orphans of nothing — alone on that lonely shore —
Born of the brainless Nature who knew not that which she bore!
Trusting no longer that earthly flower would be heavenly fruit —
Come from the brute, poor souls — no souls — and to die with the brute —

VII.

Nay, but I am not claiming your pity: I know you of old —
Small pity for those that have ranged from the narrow warmth of your fold
Where you bawl'd the dark side of your faith and a God of eternal rage,
Till you flung us back on ourselves, and the human heart, and the Age.

VIII.

But pity — the Pagan held it a vice — was in her and in me,
Helpless, taking the place of the pitying God that should be!

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Pity for all that aches in the grasp of an idiot power,
And pity for our own selves on an earth that bore not a flower;
Pity for all that suffers on land or in air or the deep,
And pity for our own selves till we long'd for eternal sleep.

IX.

"Lightly step over the sands! the waters — you hear them call!
Life with its anguish, and horrors, and errors — away with it all!"
And she laid her hand in my own — she was always loyal and sweet —
Till the points of the foam in the dusk came playing about our feet.
There was a strong sea-current would sweep us out to the main.
"Ah God" tho' I felt as I spoke I was taking the name in vain —
"Ah God" and we turn'd to each other, we kiss'd, we embraced. she and I,
Knowing the love we were used to believe everlasting would die:
We had read their know-nothing books, and we lean'd to the darker side —
Ah God, should we find Him, perhaps, perhaps, if we died, if we died;
We never had found Him on earth, this earth is a fatherless Hell —
"Dear Love, for ever and ever, for ever and ever farewell,"
Never a cry so desolate, not since the world began!
Never a kiss so sad, no, not since the coming of man.

X.

But the blind wave cast me ashore, and you saved me, a valueless life.
Not a grain of gratitude mine! You have parted the man from the wife.

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I am left alone on the land, she is all alone in the sea,
If a curse meant aught, I would curse you for not having
let me be.

XI.

Visions of youth — for my brain was drunk with the water,
it seems;
I had past into perfect quiet at length out of pleasant
dreams,
And the transient trouble of drowning — what was it when
match'd with the pains
Of the hellish heat of a wretched life rushing back thro' the
veins?

XII.

Why should I live? One son had forged on his father and
fled,
And if I believed in a God, I would thank Him, the other
is dead,
And there was a baby-girl, that had never look'd on the
light:
Happiest she of us all, for she past from the night to the
night.

XIII.

But the crime, if a crime, of her eldest-born, her glory, her
boast,
Struck hard at the tender heart of the mother, and broke it
almost;
Tho', glory and shame dying out forever in endless time,
Does it matter so much whether crown'd for a virtue, or
hang'd for a crime?

XIV.

And ruin'd by *him*, by *him*, I stood there, naked, amazed
In a world of arrogant opulence, fear'd myself turning
crazed,
And I would not be mock'd in a madhouse! and she, the
delicate wife,
With a grief that could only be cured, if cured, by the sur
geon's knife, —

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XV.

Why should we bear with an hour of torture, a moment of pain,
If every man die forever, if all his griefs are in vain,
And the homeless planet at length will be wheel'd thro' the silence of space,
Motherless evermore of an ever-vanishing race,
When the worm shall have writhed its last, and its last brother-worm will have fled
From the dead fossil skull that is left in the rocks of an earth that is dead?

XVI.

Have I crazed myself over their horrible infidel writings? O yes,
For these are the new dark ages, you see, of the popular press,
When the bat comes out of his cave, and the owls are whooping at noon,
And Doubt is the lord of this dunghill and crows to the sun and the moon,
Till the Sun and the Moon of our science are both of them turn'd into blood,
And Hope will have broken her heart, running after a shadow of good;
For their knowing and know-nothing books are scatter'd from hand to hand —
We have knelt in your know-all chapel too looking over the sand.

XVII.

What! I should call on that Infinite Love that has served us so well?
Infinite cruelty rather that made everlasting Hell,
Made us, foreknew us, foredoom'd us, and does what He will with his own;
Better our dead brute mother who never has heard us groan!

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XVIII.

Hell? if the souls of men were immortal, as men have been told,
The lecher would cleave to his lusts, and the miser would yearn for his gold,
And so there were Hell forever! but were there a God as you say,
His Love would have power over Hell till it utterly vanish'd away.

XIX.

Ah yet — I have had some glimmer, at times, in my gloomiest woe,
Of a God behind all — after all — the great God for aught that I know;
But the God of Love and of Hell together — they cannot be thought,
If there be such a God, may the Great God curse him and bring him to nought!

XX.

Blasphemy! whose is the fault? is it mine? for why would you save
A madman to vex you with wretched words, who is best in his grave?
Blasphemy! ay, why not, being damn'd beyond hope of grace?
O would I were yonder with her, and away from your faith and your face!
Blasphemy! true! I have scared you pale with my scandalous talk,
But the blasphemy to *my* mind lies all in the way that you walk.

XXI.

Hence! she is gone! can I stay? can I breathe divorced from the Past?
You needs must have good lynx-eyes if I do not escape you at last.

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Our orthodox coroner doubtless will find it a felo-de-se,
And the stake and the cross-road, fool, if you will, does it matter to me?

VASTNESS.

I.

MANY a hearth upon our dark globe sighs after many a vanish'd face,
Many a planet by many a sun may roll with the dust of a vanish'd race.

II.

Raving politics, never at rest — as this poor earth's pale history runs, —
What is it all but a trouble of ants in the gleam of a million million of suns?

III.

Lies upon this side, lies upon that side, truthless violence mourn'd by the Wise,
Thousands of voices drowning his own in a popular torrent of lies upon lies;

IV.

Stately purposes, valor in battle, glorious annals of army and fleet,
Death for the right cause, death for the wrong cause, trumpets of victory, groans of defeat;

V.

Innocence seethed in her mother's milk, and Charity setting the martyr aflame;
Thraldom who walks with the banner of Freedom, and recks not to ruin a realm in her name.

VI.

Faith at her zenith, or all but lost in the gloom of doubts that darken the schools;
Craft with a bunch of all-heal in her hand, follow'd up by her vassal legion of fools;

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VII.

Trade flying over a thousand seas with her spice and her vintage, her silk and her corn;
Desolate offing, sailorless harbors, famishing populace, wharves forlorn;

VIII.

Star of the morning, Hope in the sunrise; gloom in the evening, Life at a close;
Pleasure who flaunts on her wide down-way with her flying robe and her poison'd rose;

IX.

Pain, that has crawl'd from the corpse of Pleasure, a worm which writhes all day, and at night
Stirs up again in the heart of the sleeper, and stings him back to the curse of the light;

X.

Wealth with his wines and his wedded harlots; Flattery gilding the rift of a throne;
Opulent Avarice, lean as Poverty; honest Poverty, bare to the bone;

XI.

Fame blowing out from her golden trumpet a jubilant challenge to Time and to Fate;
Slander, her shadow, sowing the nettle on all the laurel'd graves of the Great;

XII.

Love for the maiden crown'd with marriage, no regrets for aught that has been,
Household happiness, gracious children, debtless competence, golden mean;

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XIII.

National hatreds of whole generations, and pigmy spites of the village spire;
Vows that will last to the last death-ruckle, and vows that are snapt in a moment of fire;

XIV.

He that has lived for the lust of the minute, and died in the doing it, flesh without mind;
He that has nail'd all flesh to the Cross, till Self died out in the love of his kind;

XV.

Spring and Summer and Autumn and Winter, and all these old revolutions of earth;
All new-old revolutions of Empire — change of the tide — what is all of it worth?

XVI.

What the philosophies, all the sciences, poesy, varying voices of prayer?
All that is noblest, all that is basest, all that is filthy with all that is fair?

XVII.

What is it all, if we all of us end but in being our own corpse-coffins at last,
Swallow'd in Vastness, lost in Silence, drown'd in the deeps of a meaningless Past?

XVIII.

What but a murmur of gnats in the gloom, or a moment's anger of bees in their hive? —

. . . . . .

Peace, let it be! for I loved him, and love him for ever: the dead are not dead but alive.

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ON CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY.

THEREFORE your Halls, your ancient Colleges,
Your portals statued with old kings and queens,
Your gardens, myriad-volumed libraries,
Wax-lighted chapels, and rich carven screens,
Your doctors and your proctors, and your deans
Shall not avail you, when the Daybeam sports
New-risen o'er awaken'd Albion — No!
Nor yet your solemn organ-pipes that blow
Melodious thunders thro' your vacant courts
At morn and eve — because your manner sorts
Not with this age wherefrom ye stand apart —
Because the lips of little children preach
Against you, you that do profess to teach
And teach us nothing, feeding not the heart.

SONNET.

THERE are three things which fill my heart with sighs,
And steep my soul in laughter (when I view
Fair maiden-forms moving like melodies) —
Dimples, roselips, and eyes of any hue.
There are three things beneath the blessed skies
For which I live — black eyes and brown and blue:
I hold them all most dear; but oh! black eyes,
I live and die, and only die in you.
Of late such eyes looked at me — while I mused,
At sunset, underneath a shadowy plane,
In old Bayona nigh the southern sea —
I saw no more — only those eyes — confused
And dazzled to the heart with glorious pain.

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LINES.

HERE often, when a child, I lay reclined,
I took delight in this locality.
Here stood the infant Ilion of the mind,
And here the Grecian ships did seem to be.
And here again I come, and only find
The drain-cut levels of the marshy lea, —
Gray sand-banks, and pale sunsets, — dreary wind,
Dim shores, dense rains, and heavy-clouded sea!

ADDITIONAL VERSES

To "God Save the Queen!" written for the marriage of the Princess Royal of England with the Crown Prince of Prussia, January 25, 1858.

GOD bless our Prince and Bride!
God keep their lands allied,
God save the Queen!
Clothe them with righteousness,
Crown them with happiness,
Them with all blessings bless,
God save the Queen!

Fair fall this hallow'd hour,
Farewell, our England's flower,
God save the Queen!
Farewell, first rose of May!
Let both the peoples say,
God bless thy marriage-day,
God bless the Queen!

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THE WAR.*

THERE is a sound of thunder afar,
Storm in the South that darkens the day.
Storm of battle and thunder of war,
Well, if it do not roll our way.
Form! form! Riflemen form!
Ready, be ready to meet the storm!
Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!

Be not deaf to the sound that warns!
Be not gull'd by a despot's plea!
Are figs of thistles, or grapes of thorns?
How should a despot set men free?
Form! form! Riflemen form!
Ready, be ready to meet the storm!
Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!

Let your Reforms for a moment go,
Look to your butts and take good aims.
Better a rotten borough or so,
Than a rotten fleet or a city in flames!
Form! form! Riflemen form!
Ready, be ready to meet the storm!
Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!

Form, be ready to do or die!
Form in Freedom's name and the Queen's!
True, that we have a faithful ally,
But only the Devil knows what he means.
Form! form! Riflemen form!
Ready, be ready to meet the storm!
Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!

* London Times, May 9, 1859.

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1865–1866.*

I STOOD on a tower in the wet,
And New Year and Old Year met,
And winds were roaring and blowing;
And I said, "O years that meet in tears,
Have ye aught that is worth the knowing?
Science enough and exploring,
Wanderers coming and going,
Matter enough for deploring,
But aught that is worth the knowing?
Seas at my feet were flowing,
Waves on the shingle pouring,
Old Year roaring and blowing,
And New Year blowing and roaring.

* Good Words, March, 1868.

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DEMETER

AND OTHER POEMS.

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TO THE MARQUIS OF DUFFERIN AND AVA.

I.

AT times our Britain cannot rest,
At times her steps are swift and rash;
She moving, at her girdle clash
The golden keys of East and West.

II.

Not swift or rash, when late she lent
The sceptres of her West, her East,
To one, that ruling has increased
Her greatness and her self-content.

III.

Your rule has made the people love
Their ruler. Your viceregal days
Have added fulness to the phrase
Of "Gauntlet in the velvet glove."

IV.

But since your name will grow with Time,
Not all, as honoring your fair fame
Of Statesman, have I made the name
A golden portal to my rhyme:

V.

But more, that you and yours may know
From me and mine, how dear a debt
We owed you, and are owing yet
To you and yours, and still would owe.

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VI.

For he — your India was his Fate,
And drew him over sea to you —
He fain had ranged her thro' and thro',
To serve her myriads and the State, —

VII.

A soul that, watch'd from earliest youth,
And on thro' many a brightening year,
Had never swerved for craft or fear,
By one side-path, from simple truth;

VIII.

Who might have chased and claspt Renown
And caught her chaplet here — and there
In haunts of jungle-poison'd air
The flame of life went wavering down;

IX.

But ere he left your fatal shore,
And lay on that funereal boat,
Dying, "Unspeakable" he wrote
"Their kindness," and he wrote no more;

X.

And sacred is the latest word;
And now The was, the Might-have-been,
And those lone rites I have not seen,
And one drear sound I have not heard,

XI.

Are dreams that scarce will let me be,
Not there to bid my boy farewell,
When That within the coffin fell
Fell and flash'd into the Red Sea,

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XII.

Beneath a hard Arabian moon
And alien stars. To question, why
The sons before the fathers die,
Not mine! and I may meet him soon;

XIII.

But while my life's late eve endures,
Nor settles into hueless gray,
My memories of his briefer day
Will mix with love for you and yours.

ON THE JUBILEE OF QUEEN VICTORIA.

I.

FIFTY times the rose has flower'd and faded,
Fifty times the golden harvest fallen,
Since our Queen assumed the globe, the sceptre.

II.

She beloved for a kindliness
Rare in Fable or History,
Queen, and Empress of India,
Crown'd so long with a diadem
Never worn by a worthier,
Now with prosperous auguries
Comes at last to the bounteous
Crowning year of her Jubilee.

III.

Nothing of the lawless, of the Despot,
Nothing of the vulgar, or vainglorious,
All is gracious, gentle, great and Queenly.

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IV.

You then joyfully, all of you,
Set the mountain aflame to-night,
Shoot your stars to the firmament,
Deck your houses, illuminate
All your towns for a festival,
And in each let a multitude
Loyal, each, to the heart of it,
One full voice of allegiance,
Hail the fair Ceremonial
Of this year of her Jubilee.

V.

Queen, as true to womanhood as Queenhood,
Glorying in the glories of her people,
Sorrowing with the sorrows of the lowest

VI.

You, that wanton in affluence,
Spare not now to be bountiful,
Call your poor to regale with you,
All the lowly, the destitute,
Make their neighborhood healthfuller,
Give your gold to the Hospital,
Let the weary be comforted,
Let the needy be banqueted,
Let the maim'd in his heart rejoice
At this glad Ceremonial,
And this year of her Jubilee.

VII.

Henry's fifty years are all in shadow,
Gray with distance Edward's fifty summers,
Ev'n her Grandsire's fifty half forgotten.

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VIII.

You, the Patriot Architect,
You that shape for Eternity,
Raise a stately memorial,
Make it regally gorgeous
Some Imperial Institute,
Rich in symbol, in ornament,
Which may speak to the centuries,
All the centuries after us,
Of this great Ceremonial,
And this year of her Jubilee.

IX.

Fifty years of ever-broadening Commerce!
Fifty years of ever-brightening Science!
Fifty years of ever-widening Empire!

X.

You, the Mighty, the Fortunate,
You, the Lord-territorial,
You, the Lord-manufacturer,
You, the hardy, laborious,
Patient children of Albion,
You, Canadian, Indian,
Australasian, African,
All your hearts be in harmony,
All your voices in unison,
Singing "Hail to the glorious
Golden year of her Jubilee!"

XI.

Are there thunders moaning in the distance?
Are there spectres moving in the darkness?
Trust the Hand of Light will lead her people,
Till the thunders pass, the spectres vanish,
And the Light is Victor and the darkness
Dawns into the Jubilee of the Ages.

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TO PROFESSOR JEBB,

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

FAIR things are slow to fade away,
Bear witness you, that yesterday[1]
From out the Ghost of Pindar in you
Roll'd an Olympian; and they say[2]

That here the torpid mummy wheat
Of Egypt bore a grain as sweet
As that which gilds the glebe of England,
Sunn'd with a summer of milder heat.

So may this legend for awhile,
If greeted by your classic smile,
Tho' dead in its Trinacrian Enna,
Blossom again on a colder isle.

DEMETER AND PERSEPHONE.

(IN ENNA.)

FAINT as a climate-changing bird that flies
All night across the darkness, and at dawn
Falls on the threshold of her native land,
And can no more, thou camest, O my child,
Led upward by the God of ghosts and dreams,
Who laid thee at Eleusis, dazed and dumb
With passing thro' at once from state to state,
Until I brought thee hither, that the day,
When here thy hands let fall the gather'd flower,
Might break thro' clouded memories once again
On thy lost self. A sudden nightingale
Saw thee, and flash'd into a frolic of song

[1] In Bologna. [2] They say, for the fact is doubtful.

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And welcome; and a gleam as of the moon,
When first she peers along the tremulous deep,
Fled wavering o'er thy face, and chased away
That shadow of a likeness to the king
Of shadows, thy dark mate. Persephone!
Queen of the dead no more — my child! Thine eyes
Again were human-godlike, and the Sun
Burst from a swimming fleece of winter gray,
And robed thee in his day from head to feet —
"Mother!" and I was folded in thine arms.

Child, those imperial, disimpassion'd, eyes
Awed even me at first, thy mother — eyes
That oft had seen the serpent-wanded power
Draw downward into Hades with his drift
Of flickering spectres, lighted from below
By the red race of fiery Phlegethon;
But when before have Gods or men beheld
The Life that had descended re-arise,
And lighted from above him by the Sun?
So mighty was the mother's childless cry,
A cry that rang thro' Hades, Earth, and Heaven!

So in this pleasant vale we stand again,
The field of Enna, now once more ablaze
With flowers that brighten as thy footstep falls,
All flowers — but for one black blur of earth
Left by that closing chasm, thro' which the car
Of dark Aïdoneus rising rapt thee hence.
And here, my child, tho' folded in thine arms,
I feel the deathless heart of motherhood
Within me shudder, lest the naked glebe
Should yawn once more into the gulf, and thence
The shrilly whinnyings of the team of Hell,
Ascending, pierce the glad and songful air,
And all at once their arch'd necks, midnight-maned,
Jet upward thro' the mid-day blossom. No!

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For, see, thy foot has touch'd it; all the space
Of blank earth-baldness clothes itself afresh,
And breaks into the crocus-purple hour
That saw thee vanish.

Child, when thou wert gone,
I envied human wives, and nested birds,
Yea, the cubb'd lioness; went in search of thee
Thro' many a palace, many a cot, and gave
Thy breast to ailing infants in the night,
And set the mother waking in amaze
To find her sick one whole; and forth again
Among the wail of midnight winds, and cried,
"Where is my loved one? Wherefore do ye wail?"
And out from all the night an answer shrill'd,
"We know not, and we know not why we wail."
I climb'd on all the cliffs of all the seas,
And ask'd the waves that moan about the world
"Where? do ye make your moaning for my child?"
And round from all the world the voices came
"We know not, and we know not why we moan."
"Where?" and I stared from every eagle-peak,
I thridded the black heart of all the woods,
I peer'd thro' tomb and cave, and in the storms
Of Autumn swept across the city, and heard
The murmur of their temples chanting me,
Me, me, the desolate Mother! "Where?"—and turn'd,
And fled by many a waste, forlorn of man,
And grieved for man thro' all my grief for thee,—
The jungle rooted in his shatter'd hearth,
The serpent coil'd about his broken shaft,
The scorpion crawling over naked skulls;—
I saw the tiger in the ruin'd fane
Spring from his fallen God, but trace of thee
I saw not; and far on, and, following out
A league of labyrinthine darkness, came
On three gray heads beneath a gleaming rift.

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"Where?" and I heard one voice from all the three
"We know not, for we spin the lives of men,
And not of Gods, and know not why we spin!
There is a Fate beyond us." Nothing knew.

Last as the likeness of a dying man,
Without his knowledge, from him flits to warn
A far-off friendship that he comes no more,
So he, the God of dreams, who heard my cry,
Drew from thyself the likeness of thyself
Without thy knowledge, and thy shadow past
Before me, crying "The Bright one in the highest
Is brother of the Dark one in the lowest,
And Bright and Dark have sworn that I, the child
Of thee, the great Earth-Mother, thee, the Power
That lifts her buried life from gloom to gloom,
Should be for ever and for evermore
The Bride of Darkness."

So the Shadow wail'd.
Then I, Earth-Goddess, cursed the Gods of Heaven.
I would not mingle with their feasts; to me
Their nectar smack'd of hemlock on the lips,
Their rich ambrosia tasted aconite.
The man, that only lives and loves an hour,
Seem'd nobler than their hard Eternities.
My quick tears kill'd the flower, my ravings hush'd
The bird, and lost in utter grief I fail'd
To send my life thro' olive-yard and vine
And golden grain, my gift to helpless man.
Rain-rotten died the wheat, the barley-spears
Were hollow-husk'd, the leaf fell, and the sun,
Pale at my grief, drew down before his time
Sickening, and Ætna kept her winter snow.
Then He, the brother of this Darkness, He
Who still is highest, glancing from his height
On earth a fruitless fallow, when he miss'd

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The wonted steam of sacrifice, the praise
And prayer of men, decreed that thou should'st dwell
For nine white moons of each whole year with me,
Three dark ones in the shadow with thy King.
Once more the reaper in the gleam of dawn
Will see me by the landmark far away,
Blessing his field, or seated in the dusk
Of even, by the lonely threshing-floor,
Rejoicing in the harvest and the grange.
Yet I, Earth-Goddess, am but ill-content
With them, who still are highest. Those gray heads,
What meant they by their "Fate beyond the Fates"
But younger kindlier Gods to bear us down,
As we bore down the Gods before us? Gods,
To quench, not hurl the thunderbolt, to stay,
Not spread the plague, the famine; Gods indeed,
To send the noon into the night and break
The sunless halls of Hades into Heaven?
Till thy dark lord accept and love the Sun,
And all the Shadow die into the Light,
When thou shalt dwell the whole bright year with me,
And souls of men, who grew beyond their race,
And made themselves as Gods against the fear
Of Death and Hell; and thou that hast from men,
As Queen of Death, that worship which is Fear,
Henceforth, as having risen from out the dead,
Shalt ever send thy life along with mine
From buried grain thro' springing blade, and bless
Their garner'd Autumn also, reap with me,
Earth-mother, in the harvest hymns of Earth
The worship which is Love, and see no more
The Stone, the Wheel, the dimly-glimmering lawns
Of that Elysium, all the hateful fires
Of torment, and the shadowy warrior glide
Along the silent field of Asphodel.

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OWD ROÄ.[1]

NAÄY, noä mander[2] o' use to be callin' 'im Roä, Roä, Roä,
Fo' the dog 's stoän-deäf, an e 's blind, 'e can neither stan' nor goä.

But I meäns fur to maäke 'is owd aäge as 'appy as iver I can,
Fur I owäs owd Roäver moor nor I iver owäd mottal man.

Thou 's rode of 'is back when a babby, afoor thou was gotten too owd,
For 'e 'd fetch an' carry like owt, 'e was allus as good as gowd.

Eh, but 'e 'd fight wi' a will *when* 'e fowt; 'e could howd[3] 'is oan,
An' Roä was the dog as knaw'd when an' wheere to bury his boane.

An' 'e kep his heäd hoop like a king, an' 'e 'd niver not down wi' 'is taäil,
Fur 'e 'd niver done nowt to be shaämed on, when we was i' Howlaby Daäle.

An' 'e sarved me sa well when 'e lived, that, Dick, when 'e cooms to be deäd,
I thinks as I 'd like fur to hev soom soort of a sarvice reäd.

Fur 'e 's moor good sense na the Parliament man 'at stans fur us 'ere,
An' I 'd voät fur 'im, my oän sen, if 'e could but stan fur the Shere.

[1] Old Rover. [2] Manner. [3] Hold.

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'Faäithful an' True'—them words be i' Scriptur—an'
Faäithful an' True
Ull be fun'[1] upo' four short legs ten times fur one upo' two.

An' maäybe they 'll walk upo' two but I knaws they runs
upo' four,[2]—
Bedtime, Dicky! but waäit till tha 'eärs it be strikin' the
hour.

Fur I wants to tell tha o' Roä when we lived i' Howlaby
Daäle,
Ten year sin—Naäy—naäy! tha mun nobbut hev' one
glass of aäle.

Straänge an' owd-farran'd[3] the 'ouse, an' belt[4] long afoor
my daäy
Wi' haäfe o' the chimleys a-twizzen'd[5] an' twined like a
band o' haäy.

The fellers as maäkes them picturs, 'ud coom at the fall o'
the year,
An' sattle their ends upo stools to pictur the door-poorch
theere,

An' the Heagle 'as hed two heäds stannin' theere o' the
brokken stick;[6]
An' they niver 'ed seed sich ivin'[7] as graw'd hall ower the
brick;

An' theere i' the 'ouse one night—but it 's down, an' all on
it now
Goan into mangles an' tonups,[8] an' raäved slick thruf by
the plow—

[1] Found. [2] "Ou" as in "house." [3] "Owd-farran'd," old-fashioned.
[4] Built. [5] "Twizzen'd," twisted. [6] On a staff *ragulé*.
[7] Ivy. [8] Mangolds and turnips.

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Theere, when the 'ouse wur a house, one night I wur sittin' aloän,
Wi' Roäver athurt my feeät, an' sleeäpin still as a stoän,

Of a Christmas Eäve, an' as cowd as this, an' the midders[1] as white,
An' the fences all on 'em bolster'd oop wi' the windle[2] that night;

An' the cat wur a-sleeäpin alongside Roäver, but I wur awaäke,
An' smoäkin' an' thinkin' o' things — Doänt maäke thysen sick wi' the caäke.

Fur the men ater supper 'ed sung their songs an' 'ed 'ed their beer,
An' 'ed goän their waäys; ther was nobbut three, an' noän on 'em theere.

They was all on 'em fear'd o' the Ghoäst an' dussn't not sleeäp i' the 'ouse,
But Dicky, the Ghoäst moästlins[3] was nobbut a rat or a mouse.

An' I looökt out wonst[4] at the night, an' the daäle was all of a thaw,
Fur I seed the beck coomin' down like a long black snaäke i' the snaw,

An' I heärd greät heäps o' the snaw slushin' down fro' the bank to the beck,
An' then as I stood i' the doorwaäy, I feeäld it drip o' my neck.

Saw I turn'd in ageän, an' I thowt o' the good owd times 'at was goan,

[1] Meadows.
[2] Drifted snow.
[3] "Moästlins," for the most part, generally.
[4] Once.

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An' the munney they maäde by the war, an' the times 'at was coomin' on;

Fur I thowt if the Staäte was a gawin' to let in furriners wheät,
Howiver was British farmers to stan' ageän o' their feeät.

Howiver was I fur to find my rent an' to paäy my men?
An' all along o' the feller[1] as turn'd 'is back of hissen.

Thou slep i' the chaumber above us, we could n't ha' 'eärd tha call,
Sa Moother 'ed tell'd ma to bring tha down, an' thy craädle an' all;

Fur the gell o' the farm 'at slep wi' tha then 'ed gotten wer leäve,
Fur to goä that night to 'er foälk by cause o' the Christmas Eäve;

But I cleän forgot tha, my lad, when Moother 'ed gotten to bed,
An' I slep i' my chair hup-on-end, an' the Freeä Traäde runn'd i' my 'ead,

Till I dreäm'd 'at Squire walkt in, an' I says to him "Squire, ya 're laäte,"
Then I seed at 'is faäce wur as red as the Yule-block theer i' the graäte.

An' 'e says "Can ya paäy me the rent to-night?" an' I says to 'im "Noä,"
An' 'e cotch'd howd hard o' my hairm,[2] "Then hout to-night tha shall goä."

"Tha 'll niver," says I, "be a-turnin' ma hout upo' Christmas Eäve"?

[1] Peel. [2] Arm.

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Then I waäked an' I fun it was Roäver a-tuggin' an' teärin' my slieäve.

An' I thowt as 'e'd goän cleän-wud,[1] fur I noäwaeys knaw'd 'is intent;
An' I says "Git awaäy, ya beäst," an' I fetcht 'im a kick an' 'e went.

Then 'e tummled up stairs, fur I 'eärd 'im, as if 'e 'd 'a brokken 'is neck,
An' I 'd cleär forgot, little Dicky, thy chaumber door would n't sneck;[2]

An' I slep' i' my chair ageän wi' my hairm hingin' down to the floor,
An' I thowt it was Roäver a-tuggin' an' tearin' me wuss nor afoor,

An' I thowt 'at I kick'd 'im ageän, but I kick'd thy Moother istead.
"What arta snorin' theere fur? the house is afire," she said.

Thy Moother 'ed beän a-naggin' about the gell o' the farm,
She offens 'ud spy summut wrong when there warn't not a mossel o' harm;

An' she did n't not solidly meän I wur gawin' that waäy to the bad,
Fur the gell[3] was as howry a trollope as iver traäpes'd i' the squad.

But Moother was free of 'er tongue, as I offens 'ev tell'd 'er mysen,
Sa I kep i' my chair, fur I thowt she was nobbut a-rilin' ma then.

[1] Mad. [2] Latch.

[3] The girl was as dirty a slut as ever trudged in the mud, but there is a sense of slatternliness in "traäpes'd" which is not expressed in "trudged."

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An' I says "I'd be good to tha, Bess, if tha 'd onywaäys let ma be good,"
But she skelpt ma haäfe ower i' the chair, an' screeäd like a Howl gone wud [1] —

"Ya mun run fur the lether.[2] Git oop, if ya 're onywaäys good for owt."
And I says "If I beänt noäwaäys — not nowadäys — good fur nowt —

Yit I beänt sich a Nowt [3] of all Nowts as 'ull hallus do as 'e 's bid."
"But the stairs is afire," she said; then I seed 'er a-cryin', I did.

An' she beäld "Ya mun saäve little Dick, an' be sharp about it an' all,"
Sa I runs to the yard fur a lether, an' sets 'im ageän the wall,

An' I claums an' I mashes the winder hin, when I gits to the top,
But the heät druv hout i' my heyes till I feäld mysen ready to drop.

Thy Moother was howdin' the lether, an' tellin' me not to be skeärd,
An' I was n't afeärd, or I thinks leästwaäys as I was n't afeärd;

But I could n't see fur the smoäke wheere thou was a-liggin', my lad,
An' Roäver was theere i' the chaumber a-yowlin' an' yaupin' like mad;

An' thou was a-beälin' likewise, an' a-squeälin', as if tha' was bit,

[1] She half overturned me and shrieked like an owl gone mad.
[2] Ladder.
[3] A thoroughly insignificant or worthless person.

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An' it was n't a bite but a burn, fur the merk 's[1] o' thy shou'der yit;

Then I call'd out Roä, Roä, Roä, thaw I did n't haäfe think as 'e 'd 'ear,
But 'e coom'd thruf the fire wi' my bairn i' 'is mouth to the winder theere!

He coom'd like a Hangel o' marcy as soon as 'e 'eärd 'is naäme,
Or like tother Hangel i' Scriptur 'at summun seed i' the flaäme,

When summun 'ed hax'd fur a son, an' 'e promised a son to she,
An' Roä was as good as the Hangel i' saävin' a son fur me.

Sa I browt tha down, an' I says "I mun gaw up ageän fur Roä."
"Gaw up ageän fur the varmint?" I tell'd 'er "Yeäs I mun goä."

An' I claumb'd up ageän to the winder, an' clemm'd[2] owd Roä by the 'eäd,
An' 'is 'air coom'd off i' my 'ands an' I taäked 'im at fust fur deäd;

Fur 'e smell'd like a herse a-singein', an' seeäm'd as blind as a poop,
An' haäfe on 'im bare as a bublin'.[3] I could n't wakken 'im oop,

But I browt 'im down, an' we got to the barn, fur the barn would n't burn
Wi' the wind blawin' hard tother waäy, an' the wind was n't like to turn.

[1] Mark.
[2] Clutched.
[3] "Bubbling," a young unfledged bird.

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An' *I* kep a-callin' o' Roä till 'e waggled 'is taäil fur a bit
But the cocks kep a-crawin' an' crawin' all night, an' I 'ears 'em yit;

An' the dogs was a-yowlin' all round, and thou was a-squeälin' thysen,
An' Moother was naggin' an' groänin' an' moänin' an' naggin' ageän;

An' I 'eärd the bricks an' the baulks[1] rummle down when the roof gev waäy,
Fur the fire was a-raägin' an' raävin' an' roarin' like judgment daäy.

Warm enew theere sewer-ly, but the barn was as cowd as owt,
An' we cuddled and huddled togither, an' happt[2] wersens oop as we mowt.

An' I browt Roä round, but Moother 'ed beän sa soak'd wi' the thaw
'At she cotch'd 'er death o' cowd that night, poor soul, i' the straw.

Haäfe o' the parish runn'd oop when the rigtree[3] was tummlin' in —
Too laäte — but it 's all ower now — hall hower — an' ten year sin;

Too laäte, tha mun git tha to bed, but I 'll coom an' I 'll squench the light,
Fur we moänt 'ev naw moor fires — and soa little Dick, good-night.

[1] Beams. [2] Wrapt ourselves.
[3] The beam that runs along the roof of the house just beneath the ridge.

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Dedicated to the Hon. J. Russell Lowell.

THE RING.

MIRIAM AND HER FATHER.

Miriam (*singing*). Mellow moon of heaven,
Bright in blue,
Moon of married hearts,
Hear me, you!

Twelve times in the year
Bring me bliss,
Globing Honey Moons
Bright as this.

Moon, you fade at times
From the night.
Young again you grow
Out of sight.

Silver crescent-curve,
Coming soon,
Globe again, and make
Honey Moon.

Shall not *my* love last,
Moon, with you,
For ten thousand years
Old and new?

Father. And who was he with such love-drunken eyes
They made a thousand honey moons of one?

Miriam. The prophet of his own, my Hubert — his
The words, and mine the setting. "Air and Words,"
Said Hubert, when I sang the song, "are bride
And bridegroom." Does it please you?

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Father. Mainly, child,
Because I hear your Mother's voice in yours.
She——, why, you shiver tho' the wind is west
With all the warmth of summer.
Miriam. Well, I felt
On a sudden I know not what, a breath that past
With all the cold of winter.
Father (muttering to himself). Even so.
The Ghost in Man, the Ghost that once was Man,
But cannot wholly free itself from Man,
Are calling to each other thro' a dawn
Stranger than earth has ever seen; the veil
Is rending, and the Voices of the day
Are heard across the Voices of the dark.
No sudden heaven, nor sudden hell, for man,
But thro' the Will of One who knows and rules —
And utter knowledge is but utter love —
Æonian Evolution, swift or slow,
Thro' all the Spheres — an ever opening height,
An ever lessening earth — and she perhaps,
My Miriam, breaks her latest earthly link
With me to-day.
Miriam. You speak so low, what is it?
Your "Miriam breaks" — is making a new link
Breaking an old one?
Father. No, for we, my child,
Have been till now each other's all-in-all.
Miriam. And you the lifelong guardian of the child.
Father. I, and one other whom you have not known.
Miriam. And who? what other?
Father. Whither are you bound?
For Naples which we only left in May?
Miriam. No! father, Spain, but Hubert brings me home
With April and the swallow. Wish me joy!
Father. What need to wish when Hubert weds in you
The heart of Love, and you the soul of Truth
In Hubert?

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Miriam. Tho' you used to call me once
The lonely maiden-Princess of the wood,
Who meant to sleep her hundred summers out
Before a kiss should wake her.
Father. Ay, but now
Your fairy Prince has found you, take this ring.
Miriam. "Io t' amo"—and these diamonds—beautiful!
"From Walter," and for me from you then?
Father. Well,
One way for Miriam.
Miriam. Miriam am I not?
Father. This ring bequeath'd you by your mother, child,
Was to be given you—such her dying wish—
Given on the morning when you came of age
Or on the day you married. Both the days
Now close in one. The ring is doubly yours.
Why do you look so gravely at the tower?
Miriam. I never saw it yet so all ablaze
With creepers crimsoning to the pinnacles,
As if perpetual sunset linger'd there,
And all ablaze too in the lake below!
And how the birds that circle round the tower
Are cheeping to each other of their flight
To summer lands!
Father. And that has made you grave?
Fly—care not. Birds and brides must leave the nest.
Child, I am happier in your happiness
Than in mine own.
Miriam. It is not that!
Father. What else?
Miriam. That chamber in the tower.
Father. What chamber, child?
Your nurse is here?
Miriam. My Mother's nurse and mine.
She comes to dress me in my bridal veil.
Father. What did she say?
Miriam. She said, that you and I

Digitized by Google

Had been abroad for my poor health so long
She fear'd I had forgotten her, and I ask'd
About my Mother, and she said, "Thy hair
Is golden like thy Mother's, not so fine."
Father. What then? what more?
Miriam. She said — perhaps indeed
She wander'd, having wander'd now so far
Beyond the common date of death — that you,
When I was smaller than the statuette
Of my dear Mother on your bracket here —
You took me to that chamber in the tower,
The topmost — a chest there, by which you knelt —
And there were books and dresses — left to me,
A ring too which you kiss'd, and I, she said,
I babbled, Mother, Mother — as I used
To prattle to her picture — stretch'd my hands
As if I saw her; then a woman came
And caught me from my nurse. I hear her yet —
A sound of anger like a distant storm.
Father. Garrulous old crone.
Miriam. Poor nurse!
Father. I bade her keep,
Like a seal'd book, all mention of the ring,
For I myself would tell you all to-day.
Miriam. "She too might speak to-day," she mumbled.
Still,
I scarce have learnt the title of your book,
But you will turn the pages.
Father. Ay, to-day!
I brought you to that chamber on your third
September birthday with your nurse, and felt
An icy breath play on me, while I stoopt
To take and kiss the ring.
Miriam. This very ring
Io t' amo?
Father. Yes, for some wild hope was mine
That, in the misery of my married life,

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Miriam your Mother might appear to me.
She came to you, not me. The storm, you hear
Far-off, is Muriel — your step-mother's voice.
Miriam. Vext, that you thought my Mother came to me?
Or at my crying "Mother"? or to find
My Mother's diamonds hidden from her there,
Like worldly beauties in the Cell, not shown
To dazzle all that see them?
Father. Wait a while.
Your Mother and step-mother — Miriam Erne
And Muriel Erne — the two were cousins — lived
With Muriel's mother on the down, that sees
A thousand squares of corn and meadow, far
As the gray deep, a landscape which your eyes
Have many a time ranged over when a babe.
Miriam. I climb'd the hill with Hubert yesterday,
And from the thousand squares one silent voice
Came on the wind, and seem'd to say "Again."
We saw far off an old forsaken house,
Then home, and past the ruin'd mill.
Father. And there
I found these cousins often by the brook,
For Miriam sketch'd and Muriel threw the fly;
The girls of equal age, but one was fair,
And one was dark, and both were beautiful.
No voice for either spoke within my heart
Then, for the surface eye, that only doats
On outward beauty, glancing from the one
To the other, knew not that which pleased it most,
The raven ringlet or the gold; but both
Were dowerless, and myself, I used to walk
This Terrace — morbid, melancholy; mine
And yet not mine the hall, the farm, the field;
For all that ample woodland whisper'd "debt,"
The brook that feeds this lakelet murmur'd "debt,"
And in yon arching avenue of old elms,
Tho' mine, not mine, I heard the sober rook
And carrion crow cry "Mortgage."

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Miriam. Father's fault
Visited on the children!
Father. Ay, but then
A kinsman, dying, summon'd me to Rome—
He left me wealth—and while I journey'd hence,
And saw the world fly by me like a dream,
And while I communed with my truest self,
I woke to all of truest in myself,
Till, in the gleam of those mid-summer dawns,
The form of Muriel faded, and the face
Of Miriam grew upon me, till I knew;
And past and future mix'd in Heaven and made
The rosy twilight of a perfect day.
Miriam. So glad? no tear for him, who left you wealth,
Your kinsman?
Father. I had seen the man but once;
He loved my name not me; and then I pass'd
Home, and thro' Venice, where a jeweller,
So far gone down, or so far up in life,
That he was nearing his own hundred, sold
This ring to me, then laugh'd "the ring is weird."
And weird and worn and wizard-like was he.
"Why weird?" I ask'd him; and he said "The souls
Of two repentant Lovers guard the ring;"
Then with a ribald twinkle in his bleak eyes—
"And if you give the ring to any maid,
They still remember what it cost them here,
And bind the maid to love you by the ring;
And if the ring were stolen from the maid,
The theft were death or madness to the thief,
So sacred those Ghost Lovers hold the gift."
And then he told their legend:

"Long ago
Two lovers parted by a scurrilous tale
Had quarrell'd, till the man repenting sent
This ring "Io t' amo" to his best beloved,

Digitized by Google

And sent it on her birthday. She in wrath
Return'd it on her birthday, and that day
His death-day, when, half-frenzied by the ring,
He wildly fought a rival suitor, him
The causer of that scandal, fought and fell;
And she that came to part them all too late,
And found a corpse and silence, drew the ring
From his dead finger, wore it till her death,
Shrined him within the temple of her heart,
Made every moment of her after life
A virgin victim to his memory,
And dying rose, and rear'd her arms, and cried
'I see him, Io t' amo, Io t' amo.'"

Miriam. Legend or true? so tender should be true!
Did *he* believe it? did you ask him?

Father. Ay!
But that half skeleton, like a barren ghost
From out the fleshless world of spirits, laugh'd:
A hollow laughter!

Miriam. Vile, so near the ghost
Himself, to laugh at love in death! But you?

Father. Well, as the bygone lover thro' this ring
Had sent his cry for her forgiveness, I
Would call thro' this "Io t' amo" to the heart
Of Miriam; then I bade the man engrave
"From Walter" on the ring, and send it — wrote
Name, surname, all as clear as noon, but he —
Some younger hand must have engraven the ring —
His fingers were so stiffen'd by the frost
Of seven and ninety winters, that he scrawl'd
A "Miriam" that might seem a "Muriel;"
And Muriel claim'd and open'd what I meant
For Miriam, took the ring, and flaunted it
Before that other whom I loved and love."

A mountain stay'd me here, a minster there,
A galleried palace, or a battlefield,
Where stood the sheaf of Peace: but — coming home —

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And on your Mother's birthday — all but yours —
A week betwixt — and when the tower as now
Was all ablaze with crimson to the roof,
And all ablaze too plunging in the lake
Head-foremost — who were those that stood between
The tower and that rich phantom of the tower?
Muriel and Miriam, each in white, and like
May-blossoms in mid autumn — was it they?
A light shot upward on them from the lake.
What sparkled there? whose hand was that? they stood
So close together. I am not keen of sight,
But coming nearer — Muriel had the ring —
"O Miriam! have you given your ring to her?
O Miriam!" Miriam redden'd, Muriel clench'd
The hand that wore it, till I cried again:
"O Miriam, if you love me take the ring!"
She glanced at me, at Muriel, and was mute.
"Nay, if you cannot love me, let it be."
Then — Muriel standing ever statue-like —
She turn'd, and in her soft imperial way
And saying gently: "Muriel, by your leave,"
Unclosed the hand, and from it drew the ring,
And gave it me, who pass'd it down her own,
"Io t' amo, all is well then." Muriel fled.

Miriam. Poor Muriel!

Father. Ay, poor Muriel when you hear
What follows! Miriam loved me from the first,
Not thro' the ring; but on her marriage-morn
This birthday, death-day, and betrothal ring,
Laid on her table overnight, was gone;
And after hours of search and doubt and threats,
And hubbub, Muriel enter'd with it, "See! —
Found in a chink of that old moulder'd floor!"
My Miriam nodded with a pitying smile,
As who should say "that those who lose can find."
Then I and she were married for a year,
One year without a storm, or even a cloud;

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And you my Miriam born within the year;
And she my Miriam dead within the year.
I sat beside her dying, and she gaspt:
"The books, the miniature, the lace are hers,
My ring too when she comes of age, or when
She marries; you — you loved me, kept your word.
You love me still "Io t' amo." — Muriel — no —
She cannot love; she loves her own hard self,
Her firm will, her fix'd purpose. Promise me,
Miriam not Muriel — she shall have the ring."
And there the light of other life, which lives
Beyond our burial and our buried eyes,
Gleam'd for a moment in her own on earth.
I swore the vow, then with my latest kiss
Upon them, closed her eyes, which would not close,
But kept their watch upon the ring and you.
Your birthday was her death-day.

Miriam. O poor Mother!
And you, poor desolate Father, and poor me,
The little senseless, worthless, wordless babe,
Saved when your life was wreck'd!

Father. Desolate? yes!
Desolate as that sailor, whom the storm
Had parted from his comrade in the boat,
And dash'd half dead on barren sands, was I.
Nay, you were my one solace; only — you
Were always ailing. Muriel's mother sent,
And sure am I, by Muriel, one day came
And saw you, shook her head, and patted yours,
And smiled, and making with a kindly pinch
Each poor pale cheek a momentary rose —
"*That* should be fix'd," she said; "your pretty bud,
So blighted here, would flower into full health
Among our heath and bracken. Let her come!
And we will feed her with our mountain air,
And send her home to you rejoicing." No —
We could not part. And once, when you my girl

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Rode on my shoulder home — the tiny fist
Had grasp't a daisy from your Mother's grave —
By the lych-gate was Muriel. "Ay," she said,
"Among the tombs in this damp vale of yours!
You scorn my Mother's warning, but the child
Is paler than before. We often walk
In open sun, and see beneath our feet
The mist of autumn gather from your lake,
And shroud the tower; and once we only saw
Your gilded vane, a light above the mist" —
(Our old bright bird that still is veering there
Above his four gold letters) "and the light,"
She said, "was like that light" — and there she paused,
And long; till I believing that the girl's
Lean fancy, groping for it, could not find
One likeness, laugh'd a little and found her two —
"A warrior's crest above the cloud of war" —
"A fiery phœnix rising from the smoke,
The pyre he burnt in." — "Nay," she said, "the light
That glimmers on the marsh and on the grave."
And spoke no more, but turn'd and pass'd away.
Miriam, I am not surely one of those
Caught by the flower that closes on the fly,
But after ten slow weeks her fix'd intent,
In aiming at an all but hopeless mark
To strike it, struck; I took, I left you there;
I came, I went, was happier day by day;
For Muriel nursed you with a mother's care;
Till on that clear and heather-scented height
The rounder cheek had brighten'd into bloom.
She always came to meet me carrying you,
And all her talk was of the babe she loved;
So, following her old pastime of the brook,
She threw the fly for me; but oftener left
That angling to the mother. "Muriel's health
Had weaken'd, nursing little Miriam. Strange!
She used to shun the wailing babe, and doats

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On this of yours." But when the matron saw
That hinted love was only wasted bait,
Not risen to, she was bolder. "Ever since
You sent the fatal ring" — I told her "sent
To Miriam," "Doubtless — ay, but ever since
In all the world my dear one sees but you —
In your sweet babe she finds but you — she makes
Her heart a mirror that reflects but you."
And then the tear fell, the voice broke. *Her* heart!
I gazed into the mirror, as a man
Who sees his face in water, and a stone,
That glances from the bottom of the pool,
Strike upward thro' the shadow; yet at last,
Gratitude — loneliness — desire to keep
So skilled a nurse about you always — nay!
Some half remorseful kind of pity too —
Well! well, you know I married Muriel Erne.
"I take thee Muriel for my wedded wife" —
I had forgotten it was your birthday, child —
When all at once with some electric thrill
A cold air pass'd between us, and the hands
Fell from each other, and were join'd again.
No second cloudless honeymoon was mine.
For by and by she sicken'd of the farce,
She dropt the gracious mask of motherhood,
She came no more to meet me, carrying you,
Nor ever cared to set you on her knee,
Nor ever let you gambol in her sight,
Nor ever cheer'd you with a kindly smile,
Nor ever ceased to clamor for the ring;
Why had I sent the ring at first to her?
Why had I made her love me thro' the ring,
And then had changed? so fickle are men — the best!
Not she — but now my love was hers again,
The ring by right, she said, was hers again.
At times too shrilling in her angrier moods,
"That weak and watery nature love you? No!

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'*Io* t' amo, *Io* t' amo'!" flung herself
Against my heart, but often while her lips
Were warm upon my cheek, an icy breath,
As from the grating of a sepulchre,
Past over both. I told her of my vow,
No pliable idiot I to break my vow;
But still she made her outcry for the ring;
For one monotonous fancy madden'd her,
Till I myself was madden'd with her cry,
And even that "Io t' amo," those three sweet
Italian words, became a weariness.
My people too were scared with eerie sounds,
A footstep, a low throbbing in the walls,
A noise of falling weights that never fell,
Weird whispers, bells that rang without a hand,
Door-handles turn'd when none was at the door,
And bolted doors that open'd of themselves:
And one betwixt the dark and light had seen
Her, bending by the cradle of her babe.
Miriam. And I remember once that being waked
By noises in the house — and no one near —
I cried for nurse, and felt a gentle hand
Fall on my forehead, and a sudden face
Look'd in upon me like a gleam and pass'd,
And I was quieted, and slept again.
Or is it some half memory of a dream?
Father. Your fifth September birthday.
Miriam. And the face,
The hand, — my Mother.
Father. Miriam, on that day
Two lovers parted by no scurrilous tale —
Mere want of gold — and still for twenty years
Bound by the golden cord of their first love —
Had ask'd us to their marriage, and to share
Their marriage-banquet. Muriel, paler then
Than ever you were in your cradle, moan'd,
"I am fitter for my bed, or for my grave,

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I cannot go, go you." And then she rose,
She clung to me with such a hard embrace,
So lingeringly long, that half-amazed
I parted from her, and I went alone.
And when the bridegroom murmur'd, "With this ring,"
I felt for what I could not find, the key,
The guardian of her relics, of *her* ring.
I kept it as a sacred amulet
About me, — gone! and gone in that embrace!
Then, hurrying home, I found her not in house
Or garden — up the tower — an icy air
Fled by me. — There, the chest was open — all
The sacred relics tost about the floor —
Among them Muriel lying on her face —
I raised her, call'd her "Muriel, Muriel wake!"
The fatal ring lay near her; the glazed eye
Glared at me as in horror. Dead! I took
And chafed the freezing hand. A red mark ran
All round one finger pointed straight, the rest
Were crumpled inwards. Dead! — and maybe stung
With some remorse, had stolen, worn the ring —
Then torn it from her finger, or as if —
For never had I seen her show remorse —
As if —

Miriam. — those two Ghost lovers —

Father. Lovers yet —

Miriam. Yes, yes!

Father. — but dead so long, gone up so far,
That now their ever-rising life has dwarf'd
Or lost the moment of their past on earth,
As we forget our wail at being born.
As if —

Miriam. a dearer ghost had —

Father. — wrench'd it away.

Miriam. Had floated in with sad reproachful eyes,
Till from her own hand she had torn the ring
In fright, and fallen dead. And I myself
Am half afraid to wear it.

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Father. Well, no more!
No bridal music this! but fear not you!
You have the ring she guarded; that poor link
With earth is broken, and has left her free,
Except that, still drawn downward for an hour,
Her spirit hovering by the church, where she
Was married too, may linger, till she sees
Her maiden coming like a Queen, who leaves
Some colder province in the North to gain
Her capital city, where the loyal bells
Clash welcome — linger, till her own, the babe
She lean'd to from her Spiritual sphere,
Her lonely maiden-Princess, crown'd with flowers,
Has enter'd on the larger woman-world
Of wives and mothers.

But the bridal veil —
Your nurse is waiting. Kiss me child and go.

FORLORN.

I.

HE is fled — I wish him dead —
He that wrought my ruin —
O the flattery and the craft
Which were my undoing . . .
In the night, in the night,
When the storms are blowing.

II.

"Who was witness of the crime?
Who shall now reveal it?
He is fled, or he is dead,
Marriage will conceal it . . .
In the night, in the night,
While the gloom is growing."

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III.

Catherine, Catherine, in the night
What is this you 're dreaming?
There is laughter down in Hell
At your simple scheming . . .
In the night, in the night,
When the ghosts are fleeting.

IV.

You to place a hand in his
Like an honest woman's,
You that lie with wasted lungs
Waiting for your summons . . .
In the night, O the night!
O the deathwatch beating!

V.

There will come a witness soon
Hard to be confuted,
All the world will hear a voice
Scream you are polluted . . .
In the night! O the night,
When the owls are wailing!

VI.

Shame and marriage, Shame and marriage,
Fright and foul dissembling,
Bantering bridesman, reddening priest,
Tower and altar trembling . . .
In the night, O the night,
When the mind is failing!

VII.

Mother, dare you kill your child?
How your hand is shaking!
Daughter of the seed of Cain,
What is this you 're taking? . . .

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In the night, O the night,
While the house is sleeping.

VIII.

Dreadful! has it come to this,
O unhappy creature?
You that would not tread on a worm
For your gentle nature . . .
In the night, O the night,
O the night of weeping!

IX.

Murder would not veil your sin,
Marriage will not hide it,
Earth and Hell will brand your name,
Wretch you must abide it . . .
In the night, O the night,
Long before the dawning.

X.

Up, get up, and tell him all,
Tell him you were lying!
Do not die with a lie in your mouth,
You that know you're dying . . .
In the night, O the night,
While the grave is yawning.

XI.

No — you will not die before,
Tho' you 'll ne'er be stronger;
You will live till *that* is born,
Then a little longer . . .
In the night, O the night,
While the Fiend is prowling.

XII.

Death and marriage, Death and marriage!
Funeral hearses rolling!

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Black with bridal favors mixt!
Bridal bells with tolling! . . .
In the night, O the night,
When the wolves are howling.

XIII.

Up, get up, the time is short,
Tell him now or never!
Tell him all before you die,
Lest you die forever . . .
In the night, O the night,
Where there 's no forgetting.

XIV.

Up she got, and wrote him all,
All her tale of sadness,
Blister'd every word with tears,
And eased her heart of madness . . .
In the night, and nigh the dawn,
And while the moon was setting.

HAPPY.

THE LEPER'S BRIDE.

I.

WHY wail you, pretty plover? and what is it that you fear?
Is he sick your mate like mine? have you lost him, is he fled?
And there — the heron rises from his watch beside the mere,
And flies above the leper's hut, where lives the living-dead.

II.

Come back, nor let me know it! would he live and die alone?
And has he not forgiven me yet, his over-jealous bride,

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Who am, and was, and will be his, his own and only own,
To share his living death with him, die with him side by side?

III.

Is that the leper's hut on the solitary moor,
Where noble Ulric dwells forlorn, and wears the leper's weed?
The door is open. He! is he standing at the door,
My soldier of the Cross? it is he and he indeed!

IV.

My roses — will he take them *now* — mine, his — from off the tree
We planted both together, happy in our marriage morn?
O God, I could blaspheme, for he fought Thy fight for Thee,
And Thou hast made him leper to compass him with scorn —

V.

Hast spared the flesh of thousands, the coward and the base,
And set a crueller mark than Cain's on him the good and brave!
He sees me, waves me from him. I will front him face to face.
You need not wave me from you. I would leap into your grave.
. . . . . .

VI.

My warrior of the Holy Cross and of the conquering sword,
The roses that you cast aside — once more I bring you these.
No nearer? do you scorn me when you tell me, O my lord,
You would not mar the beauty of your bride with your disease.

VII.

You say your body is so foul — then here I stand apart,
Who yearn to lay my loving head upon your leprous breast.

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The leper plague may scale my skin but never taint my heart;
Your body is not foul to me, and body is foul at best.

VIII.

I loved you first when young and fair, but now I love you most;
The fairest flesh at last is filth on which the worm will feast;
This poor rib-grated dungeon of the holy human ghost,
This house with all its hateful needs no cleaner than the beast,

IX.

This coarse diseaseful creature which in Eden was divine,
This Satan-haunted ruin, this little city of sewers,
This wall of solid flesh that comes between your soul and mine,
Will vanish and give place to the beauty that endures,

X.

The beauty that endures on the Spiritual height,
When we shall stand transfigured, like Christ on Hermon hill,
And moving each to music, soul in soul and light in light,
Shall flash thro' one another in a moment as we will.

XI.

Foul! foul! the word was yours not mine, I worship that right hand
Which fell'd the foes before you as the woodman fells the wood,
And sway'd the sword that lighten'd back the sun of Holy land,
And clove the Moslem crescent moon, and changed it into blood.

XII.

And once I worshipt all too well this creature of decay,
For Age will chink the face, and Death will freeze the supplest limbs —

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Yet you in your mid manhood — O the grief when yesterday
They bore the Cross before you to the chant of funeral hymns.

XIII.

"Libera me, Domine!" you sang the Psalm, and when
The Priest pronounced you dead, and flung the mould upon your feet,
A beauty came upon your face, not that of living men,
But seen upon the silent brow when life has ceased to beat.

XIV.

"Libera *nos*, Domine" — you knew not one was there
Who saw you kneel beside your bier, and weeping scarce could see;
May I come a little nearer, I that heard, and changed the prayer
And sang the married "nos" for the solitary "me."

XV.

My beauty marred by you? by you! so be it. All is well
If I lose it and myself in the higher beauty, yours.
My beauty lured that falcon from his eyry on the fell,
Who never caught one gleam of the beauty which endures —

XVI.

The Count who sought to snap the bond that link'd us life to life,
Who whisper'd me "your Ulric loves" — a little nearer still —
He hiss'd, "Let us revenge ourselves, your Ulric woos my wife" —
A lie by which he thought he could subdue me to his will.

XVII.

I knew that you were near me when I let him kiss my brow;

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Well, he kiss'd me on the lips, I was jealous, anger'd, vain,
And I meant to make *you* jealous. Are you jealous of me now?
Your pardon, O my love, if I ever gave you pain.

XVIII.

You never once accused me, but I wept alone, and sigh'd
In the winter of the Present for the summer of the Past;
That icy winter silence — how it froze you from your bride,
Tho' I made one barren effort to break it at the last.

XIX.

I brought you, you remember, these roses, when I knew
You were parting for the war, and you took them tho' you frown'd;
You frown'd and yet you kiss'd them. All at once the trumpet blew,
And you spurr'd your fiery horse, and you hurl'd them to the ground.

XX.

You parted for the Holy War without a word to me,
And clear myself unask'd — not I. My nature was too proud.
And him I saw but once again, and far away was he,
When I was praying in a storm — the crash was long and loud —

XXI.

That God would ever slant His bolt from falling on your head —
Then I lifted up my eyes, he was coming down the fell —
I clapt my hands. The sudden fire from Heaven had dash'd him dead,
And sent him charr'd and blasted to the deathless fire of Hell.

XXII.

See, I sinn'd but for a moment. I repented and repent,
And trust myself forgiven by the God to whom I kneel.

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A little nearer? Yes. I shall hardly be content
Till I be leper like yourself, my love, from head to heel.

XXIII.

O foolish dreams, that you, that I, would slight our marriage oath:
I held you at that moment even dearer than before;
Now God has made you leper in His loving care for both,
That we might cling together, never doubt each other more.

XXIV.

The Priest, who join'd you to the dead, has join'd our hands of old;
If man and wife be but one flesh, let mine be leprous too,
As dead from all the human race as if beneath the mould;
If you be dead, then I am dead, who only live for you.

XXV.

Would Earth tho' hid in cloud not be follow'd by the Moon?
The leech forsake the dying bed for terror of his life?
The shadow leave the Substance in the brooding light of noon?
Or if *I* had been the leper would you have left the wife?

XXVI.

Not take them? Still you wave me off — poor roses — must I go —
I have worn them year by year — from the bush we both had set —
What? fling them to you? — well — that were hardly gracious. No!
Your plague but passes by the touch. A little nearer yet!

XXVII.

There, there! he buried you, the Priest; the Priest is not to blame,
He joins us once again, to his either office true:

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I thank him. I am happy, happy. Kiss me. In the name
Of the everlasting God, I will live and die with you.

[DEAN MILMAN has remarked that the protection and care afforded by the Church to this blighted race of lepers was among the most beautiful of its offices during the Middle Ages. The leprosy of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was supposed to be a legacy of the crusades, but was in all probability the offspring of meagre and unwholesome diet, miserable lodging and clothing, physical and moral degradation. The services of the Church in the seclusion of these unhappy sufferers were most affecting. The stern duty of looking to the public welfare is tempered with exquisite compassion for the victims of this loathsome disease. The ritual for the sequestration of the leprous differed little from the burial service. After the leper had been sprinkled with holy water, the priest conducted him into the church, the leper singing the psalm "Libera me domine," and the crucifix and bearer going before. In the church a black cloth was stretched over two trestles in front of the altar, and the leper leaning at its side devoutly heard mass. The priest, taking up a little earth in his cloak, threw it on one of the leper's feet, and put him out of the church, if it did not rain too heavily; took him to his hut in the midst of the fields, and then uttered the prohibitions: "I forbid you entering the church . . . or entering the company of others. I forbid you quitting your home without your leper's dress." He concluded: "Take this dress, and wear it in token of humility; take these gloves, take this clapper, as a sign that you are forbidden to speak to any one. You are not to be indignant at being thus separated from others, and as to your little wants, good people will provide for you, and God will not desert you." Then in this old ritual follow these sad words: "When it shall come to pass that the leper shall pass out of this world, he shall be buried in his hut, and not in the churchyard." At first there was a doubt whether wives should follow their husbands who had been leprous, or remain in the world and marry again. The Church decided that the marriage-tie was indissoluble, and so bestowed on these unhappy beings this immense source of consolation. With a love stronger than this living death, lepers were followed into banishment from the haunts of men by their faithful wives. Readers of Sir J. Stephen's *Essays on Ecclesiastical Biography* will recollect the description of the founder of the Franciscan order, how, controlling his involuntary disgust, St. Francis of Assisi washed the feet and dressed the sores of the lepers, once at least reverently applying his lips to their wounds. — BOUCHER-JAMES.]

This ceremony of *quasi*-burial varied considerably at different times and in different places. In some cases a grave was dug, and the leper's face was often covered during the service.

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TO ULYSSES.

I.

ULYSSES, much-experienced man,
Whose eyes have known this globe of ours,
Her tribes of men, and trees, and flowers,
From Corrientes to Japan,

II.

To you that bask below the Line,
I soaking here in winter wet —
The century's three strong eights have met
To drag me down to seventy-nine

III.

In summer if I reach my day —
To you, yet young, who breathe the balm
Of summer-winters by the palm
And orange grove of Paraguay,

IV.

I tolerant of the colder time,
Who love the winter woods, to trace
On paler heavens the branching grace
Of leafless elm, or naked lime,

V.

And see my cedar green, and there
My giant ilex keeping leaf
When frost is keen and days are brief —
Or marvel how in English air

VI.

My yucca, which no winter quells,
Altho' the months have scarce begun,
Has push'd toward our faintest sun
A spike of half-accomplish'd bells —

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VII.

Or watch the waving pine which here
The warrior of Caprera set,[1]
A name that earth will not forget
Till earth has roll'd her latest year —

VIII.

I, once half-crazed for larger light
On broader zones beyond the foam,
But chaining fancy now at home
Among the quarried downs of Wight,

IX.

Not less would yield full thanks to you
For your rich gift, your tale of lands
I know not,[2] your Arabian sands;
Your cane, your palm, tree-fern, bamboo,

X.

The wealth of tropic bower and brake;
Your Oriental Eden-isles,[3]
Where man, nor only Nature smiles;
Your wonder of the boiling lake;[4]

XI.

Phra-Chai, the Shadow of the Best,[5]
Phra-bat[6] the step; your Pontic coast;
Crag-cloister;[7] Anatolian Ghost;[8]
Hong-Kong,[9] Karnac,[10] and all the rest.

[1] Garibaldi said to me, alluding to his barren island, "I wish I had your trees."

[2] The tale of Nejd. [3] The Philippines. [4] In Dominica.

[5] The Shadow of the Lord. Certain obscure markings on a rock in Siam, which express the image of Budda to the Buddhist more or less distinctly according to his faith and his moral worth.

[6] The footstep of the Lord on another rock.

[7] The monastery of Sumelas. [8] Anatolian Spectre stories.

[9] The three cities. [10] Travels in Egypt.

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XII.

Thro' which I follow'd line by line
Your leading hand, and came, my friend,
To prize your various book,[1] and send
A gift of slenderer value, mine.

TO MARY BOYLE.

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

I.

SPRING-FLOWERS!" While you still delay to take
Your leave of Town,
Our elmtree's ruddy-hearted blossom-flake
Is fluttering down.

II.

Be truer to your promise. There! I heard
One cuckoo call.
Be needle to the magnet of your word,
Nor wait, till all

III.

Our vernal bloom from every vale and plain
And garden pass,
And all the gold from each laburnum chain
Drop to the grass.

IV.

Is memory with your Marian gone to rest,
Dead with the dead?
For ere she left us, when we met, you prest
My hand, and said

[1] "Ulysses," the title of a number of essays by W. G. Palgrave. He died at Monte Video before seeing either this volume or my poem.

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v.

"I come with your spring-flowers." You came not, friend;
My birds would sing,
You heard not. Take then this spring-flower I send,
This song of spring,

VI.

Found yesterday — forgotten mine own rhyme
By mine old self,
As I shall be forgotten by old Time,
Laid on the shelf —

VII.

A rhyme that flower'd betwixt the whitening sloe
And kingcup blaze,
And more than half a hundred years ago,
In rick-fire days,

VIII.

When Dives loathed the times, and paced his land
In fear of worse,
And sanguine Lazarus felt a vacant hand
Fill with *his* purse.

IX.

For lowly minds were madden'd to the height
By tonguester tricks,
And once — I well remember that red night
When thirty ricks,

X.

All flaming, made an English homestead Hell —
These hands of mine
Have helpt to pass a bucket from the well
Along the line,

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XI.

When this bare dome had not begun to gleam
Thro' youthful curls,
And you were then a lover's fairy dream,
His girl of girls;

XII.

And you, that now are lonely, and with Grief
Sit face to face,
Might find a flickering glimmer of relief
In change of place.

XIII.

What use to brood? this life of mingled pains
And joys to me,
Despite of every Faith and Creed, remains
The Mystery.

XIV.

Let golden youth bewail the friend, the wife,
For ever gone.
He dreams of that long walk thro' desert life
Without the one.

XV.

The silver year should cease to mourn and sign —
Not long to wait —
So close are we, dear Mary, you and I
To that dim gate.

XVI.

Take, read! and be the faults your Poet makes
Or many or few,
He rests content, if his young music wakes
A wish in you

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XVII.

To change our dark Queen-city, all her realm
Of sound and smoke,
For his clear heaven, and these few lanes of elm
And whispering oak.

THE PROGRESS OF SPRING.

I.

THE groundflame of the crocus breaks the mould,
Fair Spring slides hither o'er the Southern sea,
Wavers on her thin stem the snowdrop cold
That trembles not to kisses of the bee:
Come Spring, for now from all the dripping eaves
The spear of ice has wept itself away,
And hour by hour unfolding woodbine leaves
O'er his uncertain shadow droops the day.
She comes! The loosen'd rivulets run;
The frost-bead melts upon her golden hair;
Her mantle, slowly greening in the Sun,
Now wraps her close, now arching leaves her bare
To breaths of balmier air;

II.

Up leaps the lark, gone wild to welcome her,
About her glance the tits and shriek the jays,
Before her skims the jubilant woodpecker,
The linnet's bosom blushes at her gaze,
While round her brows a woodland culver flits,
Watching her large light eyes and gracious looks,
And in her open palm a halcyon sits
Patient — the secret splendor of the brooks.
Come Spring! She comes on waste and wood,
On farm and field: but enter also here,
Diffuse thyself at will thro' all my blood,

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And, tho' thy violet sicken into sere,
Lodge with me all the year!

III.

Once more a downy drift against the brakes,
Self-darken'd in the sky, descending slow!
But gladly see I thro' the wavering flakes
Yon blanching apricot like snow in snow.
These will thine eyes not brook in forest-paths,
On their perpetual pine, nor round the beech;
They fuse themselves to little spicy baths,
Solved in the tender blushes of the peach;
They lose themselves and die
On that new life that gems the hawthorn line;
Thy gay lent-lilies wave and put them by,
And out once more in varnish'd glory shine
Thy stars of celandine.

IV.

She floats across the hamlet. Heaven lours,
But in the tearful splendor of her smiles
I see the slowly-thickening chestnut towers
Fill out the spaces by the barren tiles.
Now past her feet the swallow circling flies,
A clamorous cuckoo stoops to meet her hand;
Her light makes rainbows in my closing eyes,
I hear a charm of song thro' all the land.
Come, Spring! She comes, and Earth is glad
To roll her North below thy deepening dome,
But ere thy maiden birk be wholly clad,
And these low bushes dip their twigs in foam,
Make all true hearths thy home.

V.

Across my garden! and the thicket stirs,
The fountain pulses high in sunnier jets,

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The blackcap warbles, and the turtle purrs,
The starling claps his tiny castanets.
Still round her forehead wheels the woodland dove,
And scatters on her throat the sparks of dew,
The kingcup fills her footprint, and above
Broaden the glowing isles of vernal blue.
Hail ample presence of a Queen,
Bountiful, beautiful, apparell'd gay,
Whose mantle, every shade of glancing green,
Flies back in fragrant breezes to display
A tunic white as May!

VI.

She whispers, "From the South I bring you balm,
For on a tropic mountain was I born,
While some dark dweller by the cocoa-palm
Watch'd my far meadow zoned with airy morn;
From under rose a muffled moan of floods;
I sat beneath a solitude of snow;
There no one came, the turf was fresh, the woods
Plunged gulf on gulf thro' all their vales below.
I saw beyond their silent tops
The steaming marshes of the scarlet cranes,
The slant seas leaning on the mangrove copse,
And summer basking in the sultry plains
About a land of canes;

VII.

"Then from my vapor-girdle soaring forth
I scaled the buoyant highway of the birds,
And drank the dews and drizzle of the North,
That I might mix with men, and hear their words
On pathway'd plains; for — while my hand exults
Within the bloodless heart of lowly flowers
To work old laws of Love to fresh results,
Thro' manifold effect of simple powers —
I too would teach the man

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Beyond the darker hour to see the bright,
That his fresh life may close as it began,
The still-fulfilling promise of a light
Narrowing the bounds of night."

VIII.

So wed thee with my soul, that I may mark
The coming year's great good and varied ills,
And new developments, whatever spark
Be struck from out the clash of warring wills;
Or whether, since our nature cannot rest,
The smoke of war's volcano burst again
From hoary deeps that belt the changeful West,
Old Empires, dwellings of the kings of men;
Or should those fail, that hold the helm,
While the long day of knowledge grows and warms,
And in the heart of this most ancient realm
A hateful voice be utter'd, and alarms
Sounding "To arms! to arms!"

IX.

A simpler, saner lesson might he learn
Who reads thy gradual process, Holy Spring.
Thy leaves possess the season in their turn,
And in their time thy warblers rise on wing.
How surely glidest thou from March to May,
And changest, breathing it, the sullen wind,
Thy scope of operation, day by day,
Larger and fuller, like the human mind!
Thy warmths from bud to bud
Accomplish that blind model in the seed,
And men have hopes, which race the restless blood,
That after many changes may succeed
Life, which is Life indeed.

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MERLIN AND THE GLEAM.

I.

O YOUNG Mariner,
You from the haven
Under the sea-cliff,
You that are watching
The gray Magician
With eyes of wonder,
I am Merlin,
And *I* am dying,
I am Merlin
Who follow The Gleam.

II.

Mighty the Wizard
Who found me at sunrise
Sleeping, and woke me
And learn'd me Magic!
Great the Master,
And sweet the Magic,
When over the valley,
In early summers,
Over the mountain,
On human faces,
And all around me,
Moving to melody,
Floated The Gleam.

III.

Once at the croak of a Raven who crost it,
A barbarous people,
Blind to the magic,
And deaf to the melody,
Snarl'd at and cursed me.

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A demon vext me,
The light retreated,
The landskip darken'd,
The melody deaden'd,
The Master whisper'd
"Follow The Gleam."

IV.

Then to the melody,
Over a wilderness
Gliding, and glancing at
Elf of the woodland,
Gnome of the cavern,
Griffin and Giant,
And dancing of Fairies
In desolate hollows,
And wraiths of the mountain,
And rolling of dragons
By warble of water,
Or cataract music
Of falling torrents,
Flitted The Gleam.

V.

Down from the mountain
And over the level,
And streaming and shining on
Silent river,
Silvery willow,
Pasture and plowland,
Horses and oxen,
Innocent maidens,
Garrulous children,
Homestead and harvest,
Reaper and gleaner,
And rough-ruddy faces
Of lowly labor,
Slided The Gleam.—

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VI.

Then, with a melody
Stronger and statelier,
Led me at length
To the city and palace
Of Arthur the king;
Touch'd at the golden
Cross of the churches,
Flash'd on the Tournament,
Flicker'd and bicker'd
From helmet to helmet,
And last on the forehead
Of Arthur the blameless
Rested The Gleam.

VII.

Clouds and darkness
Closed upon Camelot;
Arthur had vanish'd
I knew not whither,
The king who loved me,
And cannot die;
For out of the darkness
Silent and slowly
The Gleam, that had waned to a wintry glimmer
On icy fallow
And faded forest,
Drew to the valley
Named of the shadow,
And slowly brightening
Out of the glimmer,
And slowly moving again to a melody
Yearningly tender,
Fell on the shadow,
No longer a shadow,
But clothed with The Gleam.

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VIII.

And broader and brighter
The Gleam flying onward,
Wed to the melody,
Sang thro' the world;
And slower and fainter,
Old and weary,
But eager to follow,
I saw, whenever
In passing it glanced upon
Hamlet or city,
That under the Crosses
The dead man's garden,
The mortal hillock,
Would break into blossom;
And so the land's
Last limit I came ——
And can no longer,
But die rejoicing,
For thro' the Magic
Of Him the Mighty,
Who taught me in childhood,
There on the border
Of boundless Ocean,
And all but in Heaven
Hovers The Gleam.

IX.

Not of the sunlight,
Not of the moonlight,
Not of the starlight!
O young Mariner,
Down to the haven,
Call your companions,
Launch your vessel,
And crowd your canvas,

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And, ere it vanishes
Over the margin,
After it, follow it,
Follow The Gleam.

ROMNEY'S REMORSE.

"I read Hayley's Life of Romney the other day — Romney wanted but education and reading to make him a very fine painter; but his ideal was not high nor fixed. How touching is the close of his life! He married at nineteen, and because Sir Joshua and others had said that 'marriage spoilt an artist' almost immediately left his wife in the North and scarce saw her till the end of his life; when old, nearly mad and quite desolate, he went back to her and she received him and nursed him till he died. This quiet act of hers is worth all Romney's pictures! even as a matter of Art, I am sure." (*Letters and Literary Remains of Edward Fitzgerald*, vol. i.)

BEAT, little heart — I give you this and this"
Who are you? What! the Lady Hamilton?
Good, I am never weary painting you.
To sit once more? Cassandra, Hebe, Joan,
Or spinning at your wheel beside the vine —
Bacchante, what you will; and if I fail
To conjure and concentrate into form
And color all you are, the fault is less
In me than Art. What Artist ever yet
Could make pure light live on the canvas? Art!
Why should I so disrelish that short word?
Where am I? snow on all the hills! so hot,
So fever'd! never colt would more delight
To roll himself in meadow grass than I
To wallow in that winter of the hills.
Nurse, were you hired? or came of your own will
To wait on one so broken, so forlorn?
Have I not met you somewhere long ago?
I am all but sure I have — in Kendal church —
O yes! I hired you for a season there,
And then we parted; but you look so kind

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That you will not deny my sultry throat
One draught of icy water. There — you spill
The drops upon my forehead. Your hand shakes.
I am ashamed. I am a trouble to you,
Could kneel for your forgiveness. Are they tears?
For me — they do me too much grace — for me?
O Mary, Mary!
Vexing you with words!
Words only, born of fever, or the fumes
Of that dark opiate dose you gave me, — words,
Wild babble. I have stumbled back again
Into the common day, the sounder self.
God stay me there, if only for your sake,
The truest, kindliest, noblest-hearted wife
That ever wore a Christian marriage-ring.
My curse upon the Master's apothegm,
That wife and children drag an Artist down!
This seem'd my lodestar in the Heaven of Art,
And lured me from the household fire on earth.
To you my days have been a life-long lie,
Grafted on half a truth, and tho' you say
"Take comfort, you have won the Painter's fame;"
The best in me that sees the worst in me,
And groans to see it, finds no comfort there.
What fame? I am not Raphaël, Titian — no
Nor even a Sir Joshua, some will cry.
Wrong there! The painter's fame? but mine, that grew
Blown into glittering by the popular breath,
May float awhile beneath the sun, may roll
The rainbow hues of heaven about it —
There!
The color'd bubble bursts above the abyss
Of Darkness, utter Lethe.

Is it so?
Her sad eyes plead for my own fame with me
To make it dearer.

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Look, the sun has risen
To flame along another dreary day.
Your hand. How bright you keep your marriage-ring!
Raise me. I thank you.

Has your opiate then
Bred this black mood? or am I conscious, more
Than other Masters, of the chasm beween
Work and Ideal? Or does the gloom of Age
And suffering cloud the height I stand upon
Even from myself? stand? stood . . . no more.
And yet
The world would lose, if such a wife as you
Should vanish unrecorded. Might I crave
One favor? I am bankrupt of all claim
On your obedience, and my strongest wish
Falls flat before your least unwillingness.
Still would you — if it please you — sit to me?
I dream'd last night of that clear summer noon,
When seated on a rock, and foot to foot
With your own shadow in the placid lake,
You claspt our infant daughter, heart to heart.
I had been among the hills, and brought you down
A length of staghorn-moss, and this you twined
About her cap. I see the picture yet,
Mother and child. A sound from far away,
No louder than a bee among the flowers,
A fall of water lull'd the noon asleep.
You still'd it for the moment with a song
Which often echo'd in me, while I stood
Before the great Madonna-masterpieces
Of ancient Art in Paris, or in Rome.
Mary, my crayons! if I can, I will.
You should have been — I might have made you once,
Had I but known you as I know you now —
The true Alcestis of the time. Your song —
Sit, listen! I remember it, a proof
That I — even I — at times remember'd *you.*

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"Beat upon mine, little heart! beat, beat!
Beat upon mine! you are mine, my sweet!
All mine from your pretty blue eyes to your feet,
My sweet."
Less profile! turn to me — three-quarter face.
"Sleep, little blossom, my honey, my bliss!
For I give you this, and I give you this!
And I blind your pretty blue eyes with a kiss!
Sleep!"
Too early blinded by the kiss of death —
"Father and Mother will watch you grow" —
You watch'd not I, she did not grow, she died.

"Father and Mother will watch you grow,
And gather the roses whenever they blow,
And find the white heather wherever you go,
My sweet."
Ah, my white heather only grows in heaven
With Milton's amaranth. There, there, there! a child
Had shamed me at it — Down, you idle tools,
Stampt into dust — tremulous, all awry,
Blurr'd like a landskip in a ruffled pool, —
Not one stroke firm. This Art, that harlot-like
Seduced me from you, leaves me harlot-like,
Who love her still, and whimper, impotent
To win her back before I die — and then —
Then, in the loud world's bastard judgment-day,
One truth will damn me with the mindless mob,
Who feel no touch of my temptation, more
More than all the myriad lies, that blacken round
The corpse of every man that gains a name;
"This model husband, this fine Artist!" Fool,
What matters? Six foot deep of burial mould
Will dull their comments! Ay, but when the shout
Of His descending peals from Heaven, and throbs
Thro' earth, and all her graves, if *He* should ask
"Why left you wife and children? for my sake,

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According to my word?" and I replied
"Nay, Lord, for *Art*," why, that would sound so mean
That all the dead, who wait the doom of Hell
For bolder sins than mine, adulteries,
Wife-murders, — nay, the ruthless Mussulman
Who flings his bowstrung Harem in the sea,
Would turn, and glare at me, and point and jeer,
And gibber at the worm, who, living, made
The wife of wives a widow-bride, and lost
Salvation for a sketch.
I am wild again!
The coals of fire you heap upon my head
Have crazed me. Some one knocking there without?
No! Will my Indian brother come? to find
Me or my coffin? Should I know the man?
This worn-out Reason dying in her house
May leave the windows blinded, and if so,
Bid him farewell for me, and tell him —
Hope!
I hear a death-bed Angel whisper "Hope."
"The miserable have no medicine
But only Hope!" He said it . . . in the play.
His crime was of the senses; of the mind
Mine; worse, cold, calculated.
Tell my son —
O let me lean my head upon your breast.
"Beat little heart" on this fool brain of mine.
I once had friends — and many — none like you.
I love you more than when we married. Hope!
O yes, I hope, or fancy that, perhaps,
Human forgiveness touches heaven, and thence —
For you forgive me, you are sure of that —
Reflected, sends a light on the forgiven.

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PARNASSUS.

Exegi monumentum . . .
Quod non . . .
Possit diruere . . .
. . . innumerabilis
Annorum series et fuga temporum. — HORACE.

I.

WHAT be those crown'd forms high over the sacred fountain?
Bards, that the mighty Muses have raised to the heights of the mountain,
And over the flight of the Ages! O Goddesses, help me up thither!
Lightning may shrivel the laurel of Cæsar, but mine would not wither.
Steep is the mountain, but you, you will help me to overcome it,
And stand with my head in the zenith, and roll my voice from the summit,
Sounding forever and ever thro' Earth and her listening nations,
And mixt with the great Sphere-music of stars and of constellations.

II.

What be those two shapes high over the sacred fountain,
Taller than all the Muses, and huger than all the mountain?
On those two known peaks they stand ever spreading and heightening;
Poet, that evergreen laurel is blasted by more than lightning!
Look, in their deep double shadow the crown'd ones all disappearing!
Sing like a bird and be happy, nor hope for a deathless hearing!
"Sounding for ever and ever?" pass on! the sight confuses —
These are Astronomy and Geology, terrible Muses!

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III.

If the lips were touch'd with fire from off a pure Pierian altar,
Tho' their music here be mortal need the singer greatly care?
Other songs for other worlds! the fire within him would not falter;
Let the golden Iliad vanish, Homer here is Homer there.

BY AN EVOLUTIONIST.

THE Lord let the house of a brute to the soul of a man,
And the man said "Am I your debtor?"
And the Lord — "Not yet: but make it as clean as you can,
And then I will let you a better."

I.

If my body come from brutes, my soul uncertain, or a fable,
Why not bask amid the senses while the sun of morning shines,
I, the finer brute rejoicing in my hounds, and in my stable,
Youth and Health, and birth and wealth, and choice of women and of wines?

II.

What hast thou done for me, grim Old Age, save breaking my bones on the rack?
Would I had past in the morning that looks so bright from afar!

OLD AGE.

Done for thee? starved the wild beast that was linkt with thee eighty years back.
Less weight now for the ladder-of-heaven that hangs on a star.

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I.

If my body come from brutes, tho' somewhat finer than their own,
I am heir, and this my kingdom. Shall the royal voice be mute?
No, but if the rebel subject seek to drag me from the throne,
Hold the sceptre, Human Soul, and rule thy Province of the brute.

II.

I have climb'd to the snows of Age, and I gaze at a field in the Past,
Where I sank with the body at times in the sloughs of a low desire,
But I hear no yelp of the beast, and the Man is quiet at last
As he stands on the heights of his life with a glimpse of a height that is higher.

FAR—FAR—AWAY.

(FOR MUSIC.)

WHAT sight so lured him thro' the fields he knew
As where earth's green stole into heaven's own hue,
Far—far—away?

What sound was dearest in his native dells?
The mellow lin-lan-lone of evening bells
Far—far—away.

What vague world-whisper, mystic pain or joy,
Thro' those three words would haunt him when a boy
Far—far—away?

A whisper from his dawn of life? a breath
From some fair dawn beyond the doors of death
Far—far—away?

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Far, far, how far? from o'er the gates of Birth,
The faint horizons, all the bounds of earth,
Far — far — away?

What charm in words, a charm no words could give?
O dying words, can Music make you live
Far — far — away?

POLITICS.

WE move, the wheel must always move,
Nor always on the plain,
And if we move to such a goal
As Wisdom hopes to gain,
Then you that drive, and know your Craft,
Will firmly hold the rein,
Nor lend an ear to random cries,
Or you may drive in vain,
For some cry "Quick" and some cry "Slow,"
But, while the hills remain,
Up hill "Too-slow" will need the whip,
Down hill "Too-quick" the chain.

BEAUTIFUL CITY.

BEAUTIFUL city, the centre and crater of European confusion,
O you with your passionate shriek for the rights of an equal humanity,
How often your Re-volution has proven but E-volution
Roll'd again back on itself in the tides of a civic insanity!

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THE ROSES ON THE TERRACE.

ROSE, on this terrace fifty years ago,
When I was in my June, you in your May,
Two words, "*My* Rose" set all your face aglow,
And now that I am white, and you are gray,
That blush of fifty years ago, my dear,
Blooms in the Past, but close to me to-day
As this red rose, which on our terrace here
Glows in the blue of fifty miles away.

THE PLAY.

ACT first, this Earth, a stage so gloom'd with woe
You all but sicken at the shifting scenes.
And yet be patient. Our Playwright may show
In some fifth Act what this wild Drama means.

ON ONE WHO AFFECTED AN EFFEMINATE MANNER.

WHILE man and woman still are incomplete,
I prize that soul where man and woman meet,
Which types all Nature's male and female plan,
But, friend, man-woman is not woman-man.

TO ONE WHO RAN DOWN THE ENGLISH.

YOU make our faults too gross, and thence maintain
Our darker future. May your fears be vain!
At times the small black fly upon the pane
May seem the black ox of the distant plain.

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THE SNOWDROP.

MANY, many welcomes
February fair-maid,
Ever as of old time,
Solitary firstling,
Coming in the cold time,
Prophet of the gay time,
Prophet of the May time,
Prophet of the roses,
Many, many welcomes
February fair-maid!

THE THROSTLE.

SUMMER is coming, summer is coming.
I know it, I know it, I know it.
Light again, leaf again, life again, love again,"
Yes, my wild little Poet.

Sing the new year in under the blue.
Last year you sang it as gladly.
"New, new, new, new!" Is it then *so* new
That you should carol so madly?

"Love again, song again, nest again, young again"
Never a prophet so crazy!
And hardly a daisy as yet, little friend,
See, there is hardly a daisy.

"Here again, here, here, here, happy year!"
O warble unchidden, unbidden!
Summer is coming, is coming, my dear,
And all the winters are hidden.

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THE OAK.

LIVE thy Life,
Young and old,
Like yon oak,
Bright in spring,
Living gold;

Summer-rich
Then; and then
Autumn-changed,
Soberer-hued
Gold again.

All his leaves
Fall'n at length,
Look, he stands,
Trunk and bough,
Naked strength.

IN MEMORIAM.

W. G. WARD.

FAREWELL, whose like on earth I shall not find,
Whose Faith and Work were bells of full accord,
My friend, the most unworldly of mankind,
Most generous of all Ultramontanes, Ward,
How subtle at tierce and quart of mind with mind,
How loyal in the following of thy Lord!

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CROSSING THE BAR.

SUNSET and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

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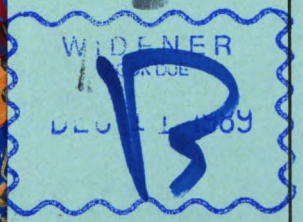
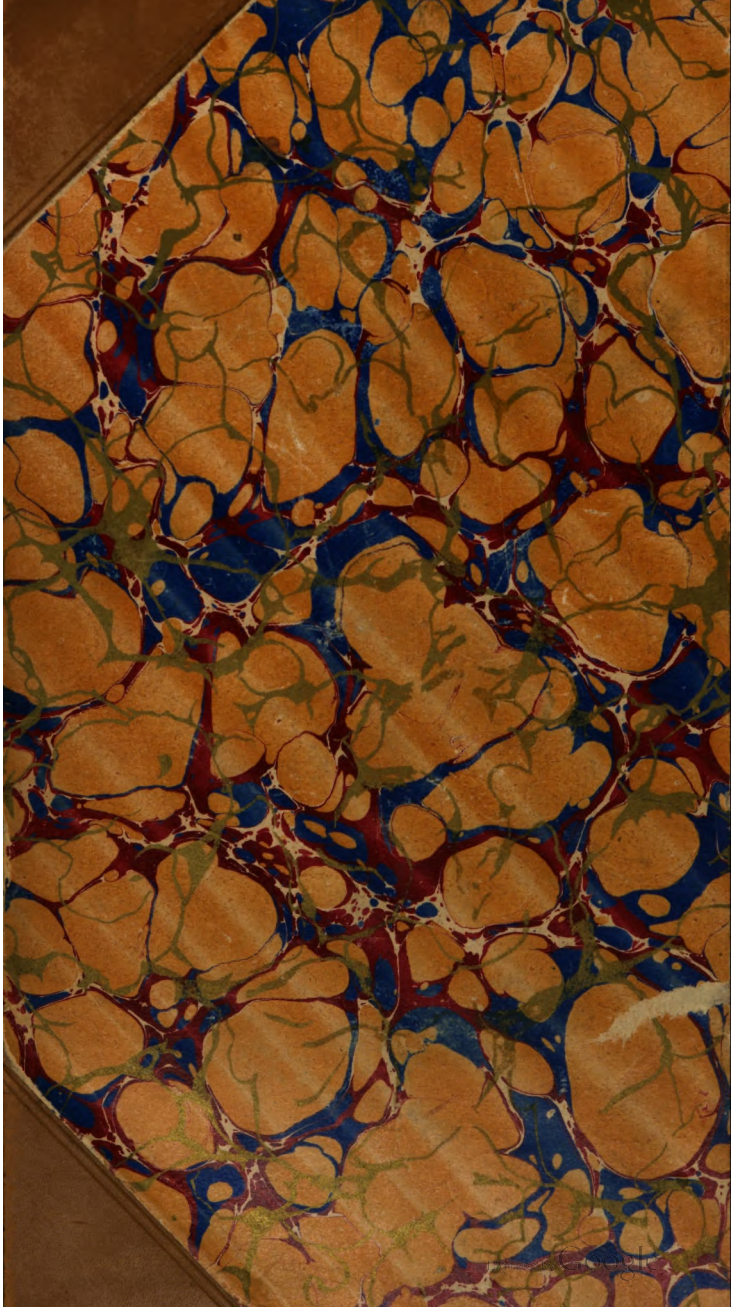
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